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English-
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REPRESENTATIVE POEMS
WITH CARLYLE'S ESSAY



BURNS



Nathaniel G. Rogers. 3
1818-18. 11C II. Vassa



ROBERT BURNS

After the painting by Alexander Nasmyth

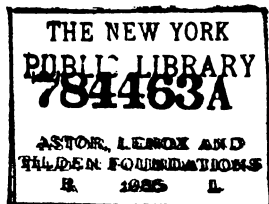
REPRESENTATIVE
POEMS OF ROBERT BURNS
WITH
CARLYLE'S ESSAY ON
BURNS

EDITED
WITH INTRODUCTIONS, NOTES, AND VOCABULARY

BY
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TO
MY BURNS SECTION
OF THE CLASS OF 1898
WORCESTER ENGLISH HIGH SCHOOL
APPRECIATIVE, SYMPATHETIC
, EAGER TO LEARN

1935
APR 10 1935
FOR FROM C. A.

THE memory of Burns, — every man's, every boy's and girl's head carries snatches of his songs, and they say them by heart, and, what is strangest of all, never learned them from a book, but from mouth to mouth. The wind whispers them, the birds whistle them, the corn, barley, and bulrushes hoarsely rustle them, nay, the music boxes at Geneva are framed and toothed to play them; the hand organs of the Savoyards in all cities repeat them, and the chimes of bells ring them in the spires. They are the property and the solace of mankind.

RALPH WALDO EMERSON.

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THE MISSION OF THE BOOK.

As the poetry of Burns is his best biography, it has seemed only fair, in preparing the second edition of Carlyle's *Essay*, to introduce representative poems. In connection with the chronological arrangement, brief introductions seem necessary, and it is hoped that the few comments will stimulate thought and encourage intelligent criticism. In order that the poems may seem less formidable to those who dread the Scotch dialect, the vocabulary appears in the footnotes. After one has read the poems the short account of Burns's life may be helpful, and the reading of the poet and of his life will enable one to appreciate and enjoy Carlyle.

Phillips Brooks, in speaking of a biography, once said to the Phillips Exeter boys, "Your reading will be a live thing if you can feel the presence of your two companions, and make them, as it were, feel yours." Carlyle has introduced us to Burns so happily that there is no excuse for our not following this and another suggestion given in the same lecture: "Never lay the biography down until the man is a living, breathing, acting person. Then you may close and lose and forget the book; the man is yours forever."

Time and again I have been surprised and delighted, after reading a tolerably good account of the poet, to find the substance of it in a form much more compact and beautiful in Carlyle's *Essay*. Carlyle's point of view is so admirable; his criticism is so comprehensive, so fair, so sympathetic;

his introduction of biographical material is so effective in interpreting the life and the work of Burns, that if we read it and reread it, if we absorb it, we shall soon come to know the peasant poet. The man, his life, and his work are peculiarly inseparable. Failure to recognize this has been responsible for numberless misconceptions and useless discussions of Burns. Carlyle's recognition of it and his skill in treating the three subjects as one have enabled him to make many a valuable criticism.

In the case of nearly every poem the text is that of the *Athenæum Press*, prepared by the late Professor J. G. Dow, under the general editorship of Professors G. L. Kittredge and C. T. Winchester. I have drawn freely from this scholarly edition, as well as from the more pretentious editions of William Wallace and Scott Douglas.

POEMS OF ROBERT BURNS.



REPRESENTATIVE POEMS.



A LOVYER and a lusty bachelor,
With lokkes crulle as they were leyd in presse.
Of twenty yeer of age he was, I gesse.
Of his stature he was of evene lengthe,
And wonderly delivere and greet of strengthe; 5

.

Singinge he was or floytinge, al the day;
He was as fresh as is the month of May.

.

He coulde songes make and wel endite,
Juste and eek daunce and wel purtreye and write.
So hote he lovede that by nightertale 10
He sleep namore than doth a nightingale.

These lines from Chaucer's description of his squire will serve to introduce Robert Burns at the age of twenty-one. On the naturally robust frame of the vigorous lad severe toil had already left stooping shoulders, yet he 15 was attractive and full of life. The fascination of his large glowing eyes, his unusual powers of conversation, and his passion for leadership combined to make him

conspicuous in the community. One who knew him well could see that he was bent on becoming prominent outside of his native town. But at the outset we notice him merely as an impetuous young man who was continually
 5 falling in love and writing verses about experiences of which we know little. In his twenty-third year he wrote the following

SONG. — MARY MORISON.

O MARY, at thy window be,
 It is the wish'd, the trysted ¹ hour !
 10 Those smiles and glances let me see,
 That make the miser's treasure poor :
 How blythely wad I bide the stoure,²
 A weary slave frae sun to sun,
 Could I the rich reward secure,
 15 The lovely Mary Morison.

Yestreen when to the trembling string³
 The dance gaed thro' the lighted ha',
 To thee my fancy took its wing,
 I sat, but neither heard nor saw :
 20 Tho' this was fair, and that was braw,⁴
 And yon the toast of a' the town,
 I sigh'd, and said amang them a',
 "Ye are na Mary Morison."

O Mary, canst thou wreck his peace,
 25 Wha for thy sake wad gladly die ?
 Or canst thou break that heart of his,
 Whase only faut is loving thee ?

¹ agreed upon.

² struggle.

³ of a village fiddler in the corner of
 a barn or a schoolroom.

⁴ finely dressed.

If love for love thou wilt na gie,
 At least be pity to me shown :
 A thought ungentle canna be
 The thought o' Mary Morison.

This tender, quiet, beautiful lyric is the work of a singer 5
 who has mastered his technic. Some lovers of Burns will
 surely agree with Hazlitt, who says: "Of all the pro-
 ductions of Burns, the pathetic and serious love-songs
 which he has left behind him in the manner of old bal- 10
 lads are perhaps those which take the deepest and most
 lasting hold of the mind. Such are the lines to 'Mary
 Morison' . . . and the song 'O my Love is like a Red,
 Red Rose.'"

Buoyant as Burns was much of the time, there were
 many occasions on which "fainting fits" or other symp- 15
 toms more or less alarming prompted verses of such a
 thoroughly serious nature as

A PRAYER

IN THE PROSPECT OF DEATH.

OH thou unknown Almighty Cause
 Of all my hope and fear !
 In whose dread presence, ere an hour, 20
 Perhaps I must appear !

If I have wander'd in those paths
 Of life I ought to shun —
 As something, loudly, in my breast,
 Remonstrates I have done — - 25

Thou know'st that Thou hast formed me,
 With passions wild and strong ;

And list'ning to their witching voice
Has often led me wrong.

Where human weakness has come short,
Or frailty stept aside,
5 Do Thou, All-good! — for such Thou art —
In shades of darkness hide.

Where with intention I have err'd,
No other plea I have
But — Thou art good; and Goodness still
10 Delighteth to forgive.

This plea is not unlike Whittier's thought in *The Eternal Goodness*:

Yet in the maddening maze of things,
And tossed by storm and flood,
15 To one fixed trust my spirit clings;
I know that God is good!

Of a production not so remorseful nor so poetic, "A Prayer, Under the Pressure of Violent Anguish," John Stuart Blackie says: "The man who could feel and write
20 thus was not far from the best piety of the psalms of David."

In these early days we notice Burns's ability to get the point of view of dumb animals. One day Hugh Wilson, a neighbor herd boy, came anxiously running up to tell
25 Burns that the ewe had entangled herself in the tether. Burns was much amused at the alarm of the "odd, glow-ran, gapin' callan, about three-fourths as wise as other folk"; he set poor Mailie free, and when they returned from the plow in the evening he repeated to his brother
30 Gilbert, much as it now stands,

THE DEATH AND DYING WORDS OF POOR
MAILIE,

THE AUTHOR'S ONLY PET YOWE:

An unco mournfu' Tate.

As Mailie an' her lambs thegither
Was ae day nibblin on the tether,
Upon her cloot¹ she coost² a hitch,³
An' owre⁴ she warsl'd⁵ in the ditch:
There, groanin, dyin, she did lie,
When *Hughoc* he cam doytin⁶ by.

5

Wi' glowrin een and lifted han's,
Poor *Hughoc* like a statue stan's;
He saw her days were near-hand ended,
But wae's my heart! he could na mend it.
He gapèd wide but naething spak —
At length poor Mailie silence brak.

10

"O thou, whase lamentable face
Appears to mourn my woefu' case!
My dying words attentive hear,
An' bear them to my Master dear.

15

"Tell him, if e'er again he keep
As muckle gear⁷ as buy a sheep —
Oh, bid him never tie them mair
Wi' wicked strings o' hemp or hair!
But ca'⁸ them out to park or hill,
An' let them wander at their will:
So may his flock increase and grow
To scores o' lambs and packs o' woo'!

20

¹ hoof. ² cast. ³ loop. ⁴ over. ⁵ struggled. ⁶ walking stupidly.
⁷ much wealth. ⁸ drive.

“Tell him, he was a Master kin’,
 An’ aye was guid¹ to me an’ mine;
 An’ now my dying charge I gie him —
 My helpless lambs, I trust them wi’ him.

5 “Oh, bid him save their harmless lives
 Frae dogs, an’ tods,² an’ butchers’ knives!
 But gie them guid cow-milk their fill,
 Till they be fit to fend³ themsel;
 An’ tent⁴ them duly, e’en an’ morn,
 10 Wi’ taets⁵ o’ hay, an’ rippes⁶ o’ corn.

 “An’ may they never learn the gaets⁷
 Of ither vile, wanrestfu’⁸ pets,
 To slink through slaps,⁹ an’ reave¹⁰ an’ steal
 At stacks o’ peas, or stocks o’ kail.¹¹
 15 So may they, like their great forbears,
 For monie a year come thro’ the shears:
 So wives will gie them bits o’ bread,
 An’ bairns greet¹² for them when they’re dead.

 “My poor toop-lamb,¹³ my son an’ heir,
 20 Oh, bid him breed him up wi’ care;
 An’ if he live to be a beast,
 To pit some havins¹⁴ in his breast!

 “An’ warn him, what I winna¹⁵ name,
 To stay content wi’ yowes¹⁶ at hame;
 25 An’ no to rin¹⁷ an’ wear his cloots,
 Like ither menseless,¹⁸ graceless brutes.

¹ good. ² foxes. ³ provide for. ⁴ take care of. ⁵ small quantities.
⁶ handfuls. ⁷ ways. ⁸ restless. ⁹ gaps in a fence. ¹⁰ rob.
¹¹ cabbage. ¹² weep. ¹³ ram. ¹⁴ sense of propriety. ¹⁵ will not.
¹⁶ ewes. ¹⁷ run. ¹⁸ indiscreet.

“ And niest¹ my yowie,² silly thing,
Gude³ keep thee frae a tether string !
Oh, may thou ne’er forgather⁴ up
Wi’ ony blastit, moorland toop,
But ay keep mind to moop⁵ and mell⁶ 5
Wi’ sheep o’ credit like thysel !

“ And now, my bairns, wi’ my last breath
I lea’e my blessin wi’ you baith ;
And when you think upo’ your mither,
Mind to be kin’ to ane anither. 10

“ Now, honest *Hughoc*, dinna fail
To teli my master a’ my tale ;
An’ bid him burn this cursed tether,
An’ for thy pains thou ’se get my blether.”’

This said, poor Mailie turn’d her head, 15
An’ closed her een among the dead !

Written later, apparently, was

POOR MAILIE’S ELEGY.

LAMENT in rhyme, lament in prose,
Wi’ saut tears tricklin down your nose ;
Our Bardie’s fate is at a close, 20
Past a’ remead ;⁸
The last, sad cape-stane⁹ o’ his woe’s —
Poor Mailie’s dead !

It’s no the loss o’ warl’s gear,¹⁰
That could sae bitter draw the tear, 25

¹ next. ² little ewe. ³ God. ⁴ meet. ⁵ nibble. ⁶ associate.
⁷ bladder. ⁸ remedy. ⁹ copestone. ¹⁰ world’s goods.

Or mak our Bardie, dowie,¹ wear
 The mournin weed :
 He's lost a friend and neebor dear,
 In Mailie dead.

Thro' a' the toun she trotted by him ;
 A lang half-mile she could descry him ;
 Wi' kindly bleat, when she did spy him,
 She ran wi' speed :
 A friend mair faithfu' ne'er cam nigh him
 10 Than Mailie dead.

I wat² she was a sheep o' sense,
 An' could behave hersel wi' mense ;³
 I'll say 't, she never brak a fence,
 Thro' thievish greed.
 15 Our Bardie, lanely, keeps the spence⁴
 Sin Mailie's dead.

Or, if he wanders up the howe,⁵
 Her livin image in her yowe
 Comes bleatin till⁶ him, owre the knowe,⁷
 20 For bits o' bread ;
 An' down the briny pearls rowe⁸
 For Mailie dead.

She was nae get⁹ o' moorlan' tips,¹⁰
 Wi' tawted ket,¹¹ an' hairy hips ;
 25 For her forbears were brought in ships,
 Frae yont the Tweed :
 A bonier fleesh ne'er cross'd the clips¹²
 Than Mailie's dead.

¹ low-spirited. ² know. ³ decorum. ⁴ inner room. ⁵ valley. ⁶ to
⁷ knoll. ⁸ roll. ⁹ offspring. ¹⁰ rams. ¹¹ matted fleece. ¹² shears.

Wae worth¹ the man wha first did shape
 That vile, wanchancie² thing — a rape !
 It makes guid fellows girn an' gape,³
 Wi' chokin dread ;
 An' Robin's bonnet wave wi' crape,
 For Mailie dead.

5

O a' ye Bards on bonie Doon !
 An' wha on Ayr your chanter's⁴ tune !
 Come, join the melancholious croon
 O' Robin's reed !
 His heart will never get aboon —⁵
 His Mailie's dead.

10

Farming was hard work for Burns ; he preferred the
 lyre to the plow. To show which class of men he belonged
 to he wrote the .

15

SONG,—GREEN GROW THE RASHES.

CHORUS. — GREEN grow the rashes,⁶ O !
 Green grow the rashes, O !
 The sweetest hours that e'er I spend
 Are spent among the lasses, O.

There's nought but care on ev'ry han',
 In every hour that passes, O :
 What signifies the life o' man,
 An't were na for the lasses, O ?

20

The war'ly⁷ race may riches chase,
 An' riches still may fly them, O ;

25

¹ woe be to.

² unlucky.

³ gnash the teeth.

⁴ pipes of a bagpipe.

⁵ above.

⁶ rushes.

⁷ worldly.

An' tho' at last they catch them fast,
 Their hearts can ne'er enjoy them, O.

But gie me a cannie¹ hour at e'en,
 My arms about my dearie, O;
 5 An' war'ly cares, an' war'ly men,
 May a' gae tapsaltee²rie,³ O.

For you sae douce,³ ye sneer at this;
 Ye 're nought but senseless asses, O:
 The wisest man the warl' e'er saw,
 10 He dearly lov'd the lasses O.

Auld Nature swears, the lovely dears
 Her noblest work she classes, O:
 Her prentice han' she try'd on man,
 An' then she made the lasses, O.

15 As these verses suggest, — he calls them the genuine
 language of his heart, — he turned instinctively from
 the grave, money-getting, place-seeking men to the gay
 group of pleasure-lovers. Yet the struggling peasant
 poet, always impatient of inequalities of rank, was often
 20 in the mood of

MAN WAS MADE TO MOURN.

A DIRGE.

WHEN chill November's surly blast
 Made fields and forests bare,
 One ev'ning as I wander'd forth
 Along the banks of Ayr,

¹ quiet.

² topsy-turvy.

³ solemn.

I spied a man, whose aged step
Seem'd weary, worn with care ;
His face was furrow'd o'er with years,
And hoary was his hair.

"Young stranger, whither wand'rest thou ?" 5
Began the rev'rend sage ;
"Dost thirst of wealth thy step constrain,
Or youthful pleasure's rage ?
Or haply, prest with cares and woes,
Too soon thou hast began 10
To wander forth, with me to mourn
The miseries of man.

"The sun that overhangs yon moors,
Out-spreading far and wide,
Where hundreds labour to support 15
A haughty lordling's pride ; —
I've seen yon weary winter-sun
Twice forty times return ;
And ev'ry time has added proofs,
That man was made to mourn. 20

"O man ! while in thy early years,
How prodigal of time !
Mis-spending all thy precious hours —
Thy glorious, youthful prime !
Alternate follies take the sway ; 25
Licentious passions burn ;
Which tenfold force gives Nature's law
That man was made to mourn.

"Look not alone on youthful prime,
Or manhood's active might ;

Man then is useful to his kind,
Supported is his right :
But see him on the edge of life,
With cares and sorrows worn,
5 Then Age and Want, oh ! ill-match'd pair —
Shew man was made to mourn.

“ A few seem favourites of fate,
In pleasure's lap carest ;
Yet, think not all the rich and great
10 Are likewise truly blest :
But, oh ! what crowds in ev'ry land
All wretched and forlorn,
Thro' weary life this lesson learn,
That man was made to mourn.

15 “ Many and sharp the num'rous ills
Inwoven with our frame !
More pointed still we make ourselves,
Regret, remorse, and shame !
And man, whose heaven-erected face
20 The smiles of love adorn, —
Man's inhumanity to man
Makes countless thousands mourn !

“ See yonder poor, o'erlabour'd wight,
So abject, mean, and vile,
25 Who begs a brother of the earth
To give him leave to toil ;
And see his lordly fellow-worm
The poor petition spurn,
Unmindful, tho' a weeping wife
30 And helpless offspring mourn.

"If I 'm design'd yon lordling's slave,
 By Nature's law design'd,
 Why was an independent wish
 E'er planted in my mind?
 If not, why am I subject to
 His cruelty, or scorn?
 Or why has man the will and pow'r
 To make his fellow mourn?
 5

"Yet, let not this too much, my son,
 Disturb thy youthful breast;
 This partial view of human-kind
 Is surely not the last!
 The poor, oppress'd, honest man,
 Had never, sure, been born,
 Had there not been some recompense
 To comfort those that mourn!
 10
 15

"O Death! the poor man's dearest friend,¹
 The kindest and the best!
 Welcome the hour my aged limbs
 Are laid with thee at rest!
 The great, the wealthy fear thy blow,
 From pomp and pleasure torn;
 But, oh! a blest relief to those
 That weary-laden mourn!"
 20

Up to the age of twenty-five, Burns was without serious
 aim in life. About that time he wrote of his wish to be a
 poet. "The romantic woodlands & sequestered scenes
 of Aire . . . & the winding sweep of Doon" needed a

¹ "A WORLD TO COME! is the only genuine balm for an agonising heart,
 torn to pieces in the wrench of parting forever (to mortal view) with friends,
 inmates of the bosom and dear to the soul." — Burns to Mrs. Dunlop, 1790.

singer. "Alas! I am far unequal to the task, both in native genius and education. Obscure I am & obscure I must be, though no young Poet nor Young Soldier's heart ever beat more fondly for fame than mine." A few
5 months later appeared the

SONG,—RANTIN ROVIN ROBIN.

THERE was a lad was born in Kyle,¹
But whatna ² day o' whatna style,³
I doubt it's hardly worth the while
To be sae nice wi' Robin.

10 CHORUS.—Robin was a rovin boy,
Rantin,⁴ rovin, rantin, rovin;
Robin was a rovin boy,
Rantin, rovin Robin.

Our monarch's hindmost year but ane
15 Was five-and-twenty days begun,⁵
'T was then a blast o' Janwar' win'
Blew hansel ⁶ in on Robin.

The gossip ⁷ keekit ⁸ in his loof,⁹
Quo' scho,¹⁰ "Wha lives will see the proof,
20 This waly ¹¹ boy will be nae coof;¹²
I think we'll ca' him Robin.

¹ the central district of Ayrshire, between the Irvine and the Doon. ² what particular. ³ whether "old style" or "new style." ⁴ all of animal spirits. ⁵ George II; 25 January, 1759. ⁶ first money, or gift, bestowed on a special occasion. ⁷ sponsor in baptism. ⁸ peeped. ⁹ palm. ¹⁰ she. ¹¹ goodly. ¹² fool.

“He’ll hae misfortunes great and sma’,
But aye a heart aboon them a’;
He’ll be a credit till ¹ us a’ —
We’ll a’ be proud o’ Robin.

“But sure as three times three mak nine, 5
I see by ilka ² score and line,
This chap will dearly like our kin’,
So leeze ³ me on thee, Robin.”

Without overestimating his ability, Burns was courageous and confident. Within little more than a year he wrote most of the poems that have made him famous, and about this time he began to think of publishing.

During the autumn and winter seasons some of his best verses were composed while he was holding the plow. On one occasion the boy who was guiding the horses ran 15 after a field mouse to kill it with the “pattle.” Burns promptly called him back, and soon afterward read to him the poem

TO A MOUSE,

ON TURNING UP HER NEST WITH THE PLOUGH,
NOVEMBER, 1785.

WEE, sleekit, cawrin, tim’rous beastie,
Oh, what a panic’s in thy breastie! 20
Thou need na start awa sae hasty
Wi’ bickerin brattle! ⁴
I wad be laith to rin an’ chase thee
Wi’ murd’rin pattle! ⁵

¹ to. ² each, every. ³ blessings on. ⁴ hasty scamper.
to remove clay that clung to the plowshare.

⁵ a spade

And list'nin',
Has oft

Where humil.
Or frailty
5 Do Thou, A
In shades

Where with it
No other
But — Thou
10 Delighteth

This plea is not unlike
nal Goodness :

Yet in the mad
And tossed
15 To one fixed
I know that

Of a production not
Prayer, Under the Pres
Stuart Blackie says : "It
20 thus was not far from the
David."

In these early days we new
point of view of dumb
a neighbor herd boy, came
25 Burns that the ewe had
Burns was much amused
ran, gapin' callan, about
folk"; he set poor Maude
from the plow in the eve
30 *Gilbert, much as it now*

But¹ house or hald,²
To thole³ the winter's sleety dribble
An' cranreuch⁴ cauld !

But, Mousie, thou art no thy lane⁵
In proving foresight may be vain :
The best laid schemes o' mice an' men
Gang aft a-gley,
An' lea'e us nought but grief an' pain
For promis'd joy.

5

Still thou art blest, compar'd wi' me !
The present only toucheth thee :
But, och ! I backward cast my ee
On prospects drear !
An' forward, tho' I canna see,
I guess an' fear !

10

15

From this expression of the poet's fine, sincere sympathy with nature we turn to a picture of family life. It becomes doubly attractive when we consider it as a faithful revelation of Scottish home life, family devotion and patriotism. And we cherish it all the more because it gives us a glimpse of Burns's own father and his home. After the father's death Burns, as the oldest son, took his place at devotions. He conducted the family worship every night when at home during his residence at Mossgiel.

25

¹ without.

² holding.

³ endure.

⁴ hoarfrost.

⁵ not alone.

THE COTTER'S SATURDAY NIGHT.

INSCRIBED TO ROBERT AIKEN, ESQ.

Let not Ambition mock their useful toil,
 Their homely joys and destiny obscure ;
 Nor Grandeur hear with a disdainful smile
 The short and simple annals of the poor. — GRAY.

My lov'd, my honour'd, much respected friend !
 No mercenary bard his homage pays ;
 With honest pride, I scorn each selfish end :
 My dearest meed a friend's esteem and praise.
 5 To you I sing, in simple Scottish lays,
 The lowly train in life's sequester'd scene ;
 The native feelings strong, the guileless ways ;
 What Aiken in a cottage would have been ;
 Ah ! tho' his worth unknown, far happier there, I ween !

10 November chill blows loud wi' angry sugh,
 The short'ning winter day is near a close ;
 The miry beasts retreating frae the pleugh,
 The black'ning trains o' craws to their repose ;
 The toil-worn Cotter frae his labour goes, —
 15 This night his weekly moil¹ is at an end, —
 Collects his spades, his mattocks, and his hoes,
 Hoping the morn in ease and rest to spend,
 And weary, o'er the moor, his course does hameward bend.

At length his lonely cot appears in view,
 20 Beneath the shelter of an agèd tree ;
 Th' expectant wee-things, toddlin, stacher² through
 To meet their dad, wi' flichterin³ noise an' glee.
 His wee bit ingle,⁴ blinkin bonilie,

¹ toil.² stagger.³ fluttering.⁴ fireplace.

His clean hearth-stane, his thrifty wifie's smile,
The lispin infant prattling on his knee,
Does a' his weary kiaugh¹ and care² beguile,
An' makes him quite forget his labour an' his toil.

Belyve,³ the elder bairns come drappin in, 5
At service out amang the farmers roun';
Some ca the pleugh, some herd, some tentie⁴ rin
A cannie⁵ errand to a neibor toun :⁶
Their eldest hope, their Jenny, woman-grown,
In youthfu' bloom, love sparkling in her ee, 10
Comes hame, perhaps to shew a braw new gown,
Or deposit her sair-won penny-fee,
To help her parents dear, if they in hardship be.

With joy unfeign'd brothers and sisters meet,
An' each for other's weelfare kindly spiers :⁷ 15
The social hours, swift-wing'd, unnotic'd fleet;
Each tells the uncos⁸ that he sees or hears.
The parents, partial, eye their hopeful years;
Anticipation forward points the view;
The mother, wi' her needle an' her sheers, 20
Gars⁹ auld claes look amaist as weel's the new;
The father mixes a' wi' admonition due.

Their master's an' their mistress's command
The youngers a' are warned to obey;
An' mind their labours wi' an eydent¹⁰ hand, 25
An' ne'er, tho' out o' sight, to jauk¹¹ or play:
"An' O! be sure to fear the Lord alway,

¹ fret. ² the original words, changed in a later edition to "carking cares."

³ presently. ⁴ attentive. ⁵ careful. ⁶ farm. ⁷ asks.

⁸ news. ⁹ makes. ¹⁰ diligent. ¹¹ trifle.

An' mind your duty, duly, morn an' night !
 Lest in temptation's path ye gang astray,
 Implore His counsel and assisting might :
 They never sought in vain that sought the Lord aright ! "

- 5 But hark ! a rap comes gently to the door.
 Jenny, wha kens the meaning o' the same,
 Tells how a neibor lad cam o'er the moor,
 To do some errands, and convoy her hame.
 The wily mother sees the conscious flame
 10 Sparkle in Jenny's ee, and flush her cheek ;
 Wi' heart-struck, anxious care, inquires his name,
 While Jenny hafflins ¹ is afraid to speak ;
 Weel pleas'd the mother hears it's nae wild worthless rake.

- Wi' kindly welcome Jenny brings him ben, ²
 15 A strappin youth ; he takes the mother's eye ;
 Blythe Jenny sees the visit 's no ill taen ;
 The father cracks ³ of horses, pleughs, and kye.
 The youngster's artless heart o'erflows wi' joy,
 But, blate ⁴ and laithfu', ⁵ scarce can weel behave ;
 20 The mother wi' a woman's wile ⁶ can spy
 What maks the youth sae bashfu' an' sae grave,
 Weel pleas'd to think her bairn's respected like the lave. ⁷

- O happy love ! where love like this is found !
 O heart-felt raptures ! bliss beyond compare !
 25 I've pacèd much this weary, mortal round,
 And sage experience bids me this declare —
 "If Heaven a draught of heavenly pleasure spare,
 One cordial in this melancholy vale,
 'T is when a youthful, loving, modest pair,
 30 In other's arms breathe out the tender tale,
 Beneath the milk-white thorn that scents the ev'ning gale."

¹ partly. ² in. ³ talks. ⁴ bashful. ⁵ shy. ⁶ penetration. ⁷ rest.

Is there, in human form, that bears a heart,
 A wretch ! a villain ! lost to love and truth !
 That can with studied, sly, ensnaring art
 Betray sweet Jenny's unsuspecting youth ?
 Curse on his perjur'd arts ! dissembling smooth ! 5
 Are honour, virtue, conscience, all exil'd ?
 Is there no pity, no relenting ruth,
 Points to the parents fondling o'er their child,
 Then paints the ruin'd maid, and their distraction wild ?

But now the supper crowns their simple board, 10
 The halesome parritch,¹ chief of Scotia's food ;
 The sowpe² their only hawkie³ does afford,
 That yont the hallan⁴ snugly chows her cud.
 The dame brings forth, in complimentary mood,
 To grace the lad, her weel-hain'd kebbuck⁵ fell, 15
 An' aft⁶ he's prest, an' aft he ca's it guid ;⁷
 The frugal wife, garrulous, will tell,
 How 't was a towmond⁸ auld, sin' lint was i' the bell.⁹

The cheerfu' supper done, wi' serious face,
 They round the ingle form a circle wide ; 20
 The sire turns o'er with patriarchal grace
 The big ha'-bible,¹⁰ ance his father's pride ;
 His bonnet rev'rently is laid aside,
 His lyart haffets¹¹ wearing thin and bare ;
 Those strains that once did sweet in Zion glide, 25
 He wales¹² a portion with judicious care ;
 And, " Let us worship GOD," he says with solemn air.

They chant their artless notes in simple guise ;
 They tune their hearts, by far the noblest aim :

¹ porridge. ² liquid food. ³ cow. ⁴ porch. ⁵ well-spiced cheese.
⁶ often. ⁷ good. ⁸ twelvemonth. ⁹ flax in flower. ¹⁰ large family
Bible kept in the hall or chief room. ¹¹ gray side-locks. ¹² selects.

Perhaps *Dundee's*¹ wild-warbling measures rise,
 Or plaintive *Martyrs*,¹ worthy of the name,
 Or noble *Elgin*¹ beats² the heaven-ward flame,
 The sweetest far of Scotia's holy lays.
 5 Compar'd with these, Italian trills are tame;
 The tickl'd ear no heart-felt raptures raise;
 Nae unison hae they with our Creator's praise.

The priest-like father reads the sacred page, —
 How Abram was the friend of GOD on high;
 10 Or Moses bade eternal warfare wage
 With Amalek's ungracious progeny;
 Or how the royal bard did groaning lie
 Beneath the stroke of heaven's avenging ire;
 Or Job's pathetic plaint, and wailing cry;
 15 Or rapt Isaiah's wild, seraphic fire;
 Or other holy seers that tune the sacred lyre.

Perhaps the Christian volume is the theme, —
 How guiltless blood for guilty man was shed;
 How HE, who bore in heav'n the second name,
 20 Had not on earth whereon to lay His head:
 How His first followers and servants sped;³
 The precepts sage they wrote to many a land:⁴
 How he, who lone in Patmos banishèd,
 Saw in the sun a mighty angel stand,
 25 And heard great Bab'lon's doom pronounced by Heav'n's
 command.⁵

Then kneeling down to HEAVEN'S ETERNAL KING,
 The saint, the father, and the husband prays:
 Hope "springs exulting on triumphant wing,"

¹ favorite psalm tunes.² adds fuel to.³ the Acts of the Apostles.⁴ the Epistles.⁵ the Apocalypse.

That thus they all shall meet in future days :
 There ever bask in uncreated rays,
 No more to sigh or shed the bitter tear,
 Together hymning their Creator's praise,
 In such society, yet still more dear, 5
 While circling Time moves round in an eternal sphere.

Compar'd with this, how poor Religion's pride
 In all the pomp of method and of art,
 When men display to congregations wide
 Devotion's ev'ry grace except the heart ! 10
 The Pow'r, incens'd, the pageant will desert,
 The pompous strain, the sacerdotal stole ;
 But haply in some cottage far apart
 May hear, well pleased, the language of the soul,
 And in His book of life the inmates poor enrol. 15

Then homeward all take off their sev'ral way ;
 The youngling cottagers retire to rest ;
 The parent-pair their secret homage pay,
 And proffer up to Heav'n the warm request,
 That He, who stills the raven's clam'rous nest 20
 And decks the lily fair in flow'ry pride,
 Would, in the way His wisdom sees the best,
 For them and for their little ones provide ;
 But chiefly, in their hearts with grace divine preside.

From scenes like these old Scotia's grandeur springs, 25
 That makes her lov'd at home, rever'd abroad :
 Princes and lords are but the breath of kings,
 " An honest man 's the noblest work of God " :¹

¹ Cf. Fletcher's

Man is his own star ; and that soul that can
 Be honest is the only perfect man,

and Pope, *Essay on Man*, 247.

And certes, in fair Virtue's heavenly road,
 The cottage leaves the palace far behind :
 What is a lordling's pomp ? a cumbrous load,
 Disguising oft the wretch of human kind,
 5 Studied in arts of hell, in wickedness refin'd !

O Scotia ! my dear, my native soil !
 For whom my warmest wish to Heaven is sent !
 Long may thy hardy sons of rustic toil
 Be blest with health, and peace, and sweet content !
 10 And, oh ! may Heaven their simple lives prevent
 From luxury's contagion, weak and vile !
 Then, howe'er crowns and coronets be rent,
 A virtuous populace may rise the while,
 And stand a wall of fire around their much-lov'd isle.

15 O Thou ! who pour'd the patriotic tide
 That stream'd thro' Wallace's¹ undaunted heart,
 Who dar'd to nobly stem tyrannic pride,
 Or nobly die, the second glorious part, —
 (The patriot's God peculiarly thou art,
 20 His friend, inspirer, guardian, and reward !)
 O never, never Scotia's realm desert,
 But still the patriot, and the patriot-bard,
 In bright succession raise, her ornament and guard !

In this triumph of piety and morality over poverty
 25 Burns gives us a part of his philosophy of life. Like
 Goldsmith, he believes that happiness depends not on
 wealth or rank, but on the heart. In the *Epistle to Davie*
 he says :

If happiness hae not her seat
 30 And centre in the breast,

¹ the outlaw knight, William Wallace, who in 1297 roused the Scots to demand their freedom ; the national hero.

We may be wise, or rich, or great,
 But never can be blest :
 Nae treasures, nor pleasures,
 Could make us happy lang ;
 The heart ay 's the part ay, 5
 That makes us right or wrang.

Sainte-Beuve says that in this poem Burns is not only picturesque but "cordial, moral, Christian, patriotic. His episode of Jenny introduces and personifies the chastity of emotion ; the Bible, read aloud, casts a religious glow 10 over the whole scene. Then come those lofty thoughts upon the greatness of old Scotland, which is based on such home scenes as this."

Burns included in his family the faithful companion whom he introduces in the poem 15

THE AULD FARMER'S NEW-YEAR MORNING SAL-
 UTATION TO HIS AULD MARE, MAGGIE,

ON GIVING HER THE ACCUSTOMED RIPP OF CORN TO HANSEL
 IN THE NEW YEAR.

A GUID New-Year I wish thee, Maggie !
 Hae, there 's a ripp¹ to thy auld baggie :²
 Tho' thou 's howe-backit³ now, an' knaggie,⁴
 I 've seen the day
 Thou could hae gane like ony staggie⁵ 20
 Out-owre the lay.⁶

Tho' now thou 's dowie,⁷ stiff, an' crazy,
 An' thy auld hide 's as white 's a daisie,
 I 've seen thee dappl't, sleek an' glaizie,⁸

¹handful. ²stomach. ³hollow-backed. ⁴bony. ⁵cock. ⁶lea.

⁷low-spirited. ⁸glossy.

A bonie gray :
 He should been tight that daur't to raize thee,¹
 Ance in a day.

Thou ance was i' the foremost rank,
 5 A filly buirdly,² steeve,³ an' swank,⁴
 An' set weel down a shapely shank
 As e'er tread yird ;⁵
 An' could hae flown out-owre a stank⁶
 Like ony bird.

10 It's now some nine-and-twenty year
 Sin' thou was my guid-father's meere ;⁷
 He gied me thee, o' tocher⁸ clear,
 An' fifty mark ;
 Tho' it was sma', 't was weel won gear,⁹
 15 An' thou was stark.¹⁰

When first I gaed to woo my Jenny,
 Ye then was trottin wi' your minnie :¹¹
 Tho' ye was trickie, slee and funny,
 Ye ne'er was donsie ;¹²
 20 But hamely, tawie,¹³ quiet an' cannie,¹⁴
 An' unco sonsie.¹⁵

That day ye pranc'd wi' mickle pride,
 When ye bure hame my bonie bride :
 An' sweet an' gracefu' she did ride,
 25 Wi' maiden air !
 Kyle-Stewart I could braggèd wide¹⁶
 For sic a pair.

¹ He should have been girt for action that dared to excite thee. ² strong.
³ firm. ⁴ stately. ⁵ earth. ⁶ ditch. ⁷ father-in-law's mare.
⁸ dowry. ⁹ well-earned money. ¹⁰ strong. ¹¹ mother. ¹² mis-
chlevious. ¹³ tame. ¹⁴ safe. ¹⁵ very plump. ¹⁶ I could
have challenged the country between the Irvine and the Ayt.

Tho' now ye dow¹ but hoyte an' hoble²
 An' wintle³ like a saumont-coble,⁴
 That day ye was a jinker⁵ noble
 For heels an' win'!⁶
 An' ran them till they a' did wauble⁷ 5
 Far, far behin'!

When thou an' I were young an' skiegh,⁸
 An' stable meals at fairs were driegh,⁹
 How thou wad prance an' snore an' skriegh¹⁰
 An' tak' the road! 10
 Toun's bodies ran an' stood abiegh¹¹
 An' ca't¹² thee mad.

When thou was corn't an' I was mellow,
 We took the road ay like a swallow;
 At brooses¹³ thou had ne'er a fellow 15
 For pith an' speed;
 But ev'ry tail thou pay't them hollow,
 Whare'er thou gaed.

The sma', droop-rumpl't,¹⁴ hunter cattle
 Might aiblins¹⁵ waur't¹⁶ thee for a brattle;¹⁷ 20
 But sax¹⁸ Scotch mile thou try't their mettle
 An' gart¹⁹ them whaizle:²⁰
 Nae whip nor spur, but just a wattle²¹
 O' saugh²² or hazel.

Thou was a noble fittie-lan'²³ 25
 As e'er in tug or tow²⁴ was drawn!

¹ can. ² limp. ³ stagger. ⁴ salmon-boat. ⁵ runner. ⁶ wind.
⁷ reel. ⁸ high-mettled. ⁹ tedious. ¹⁰ whinny. ¹¹ out of
the way. ¹² called. ¹³ A *broose* is a race at a country wedding.
¹⁴ drooping at the crupper. ¹⁵ perhaps. ¹⁶ beat. ¹⁷ spurt.
¹⁸ six. ¹⁹ made. ²⁰ wheeze. ²¹ switch. ²² willow.
²³ foot-the-land; the near horse of the hinder pair in plowing, which does
not step in the furrow. ²⁴ rope.

Aft thee an' I, in aught hours' gaun'¹
 On guid March-weather,
 Hae turn'd sax rood² beside our han'
 For days thegither.

5 Thou never braing't³ an' fetch't⁴ an' flisket,⁵
 But thy auld tail thou wad hae whisket⁶
 An' spread abreed thy weel-fill'd brisket,⁷
 Wi' pith an' pow'r,
 Till spritty knowes wad rair't and risket
 10 An' slypet owre.⁸

When frosts lay lang an' snaws were deep
 An' threaten'd labour back to keep,
 I gied thy cog a wee-bit heap
 Aboon the timmer:⁹
 15 I ken'd my Maggie wad na sleep
 For that,¹⁰ or simmer.¹¹

In cart or car thou never reestet,
 The steyst brae¹² thou wad hae faced it;
 Thou never lap¹³ an' sten't an' breastet,¹⁴
 20 Then stood to blaw,
 But just thy step a wee thing hastet,
 Thou snoov't awa.¹⁵

My pleugh is now thy bairn-time a',¹⁶
 Four gallant brutes as e'er did draw;
 25 Forbye¹⁷ sax mae¹⁸ I've sell't awa,

¹ eight hours' going. ² six roods. ³ fretted. ⁴ raged. ⁵ kicked.
⁶ lashed. ⁷ breast. ⁸ "Till hillocks, where the earth was full of
 tough-rooted plants, would have given forth a cracking sound, and the
 clods fallen gently over." — *Shairp*. ⁹ filled thy measure of oats to
 overflowing. ¹⁰ "On account of the late season" the spring work
 would be harder. ¹¹ before summer. ¹² steepest hill. ¹³ leaped.
¹⁴ reared. ¹⁵ moved on steadily. ¹⁶ My plowing team of four
 horses are now thine offspring. ¹⁷ besides. ¹⁸ six more.

That thou hast nurst:
They drew me thretteen¹ pund an' twa,
The vera warst.

Mony a sair daurg² we twa hae wrought.
An' wi' the weary warl' fought! 5
An' mony an anxious day I thought
We wad be beat!
Yet here to crazy age we're brought
Wi' something yet.

And think na, my auld trusty servan', 10
That now, perhaps, thou's less deservin,
And thy auld days may end in stervin;
For my last fou,³
A heapit stimpart,⁴ I'll reserve ane,
Laid by for you. 15

We've worn to crazy years thegither;
We'll toyte⁵ about wi' ane anither;
Wi' tentie⁶ care I'll flit thy tether
To some hained rig,⁷
Whare ye may noble rax⁸ your leather, 20
Wi' sma' fatigue.

Dow says this is "the *John Anderson, my jo*, of Burns's poems. It portrays a long and tried friendship and those relations of human intimacy that are common between the country people of Scotland and their domestic animals." 25

Know Burns, know his dog. We are quite ready to make the acquaintance of a favorite dog, Luath. In order to give Luath an opportunity to speak for himself the poet created an imaginary Cæsar.

¹ thirteen. ² heavy day's work. ³ measure of grain. ⁴ quarter of a peck.
⁵ totter. ⁶ heedful. ⁷ reserved piece of ground. ⁸ stretch.

THE TWA DOGS.

A TALE.

'T WAS in that place o' Scotland's isle,
 That bears the name o' auld King Coil,¹
 Upon a bonie day in June,
 When wearin' through the afternoon,
 5 Twa dogs that werena thrang² at hame
 Forgathered ance upon a time.

The first I'll name, they ca'd him Cæsar,
 Was keepit for his Honour's pleasure ;
 His hair, his size, his mouth, his lugs,³
 10 Showed he was nane o' Scotland's dogs ;
 But whalpit⁴ some place far abroad,
 Whare sailors gang to fish for cod.⁵

His lockèd, letter'd, braw brass collar
 Show'd him the gentleman and scholar ;
 15 But though he was o' high degree,
 The fient a pride⁶ — nae pride had he ;⁷
 But wad hae spent an hour caressin',
 Even wi' a tinkler-gypsy's messan :⁸
 At kirk or market, mill or smiddie,⁹
 20 Nae tawted tyke,¹⁰ though e'er sae duddie,¹¹
 But he wad stan't,¹² as glad to see him,
 And stroan't on stanes¹³ and hillocks wi' him.

¹ Kyle; cf. *Rantin Rovin Robin*, 1. Tradition says the district derived its name from Coilus, "king of the Picts." ² busy. ³ ears. ⁴ whelped.

⁵ Newfoundland. ⁶ no pride whatever. ⁷ Cf. *Lines on an Inter-view with Lord Daer*. ⁸ vagabond-gypsy's cur. ⁹ smithy.

¹⁰ matted dog. ¹¹ unkempt. ¹² have stood. ¹³ stones.

The tither was a ploughman's collie,
 A rhymin, rantin, ravin billie,¹
 Wha for his friend and comrade had him,
 An' in his freaks had Luath ca'd him,
 After some dog in Highland sang,² 5
 Was made lang syne, — Lord knows how lang.

He was a gash³ an' faithfu' tyke,
 As ever lap⁴ a sheugh⁵ or dike.⁶
 His honest, sonsie,⁷ baws'nt face⁸
 Ay gat him friends in ilka place; 10
 His breast was white, his touzie⁹ back
 Weel clad wi' coat o' glossy black;
 His gawcie¹⁰ tail wi' upward curl
 Hung owre his hurdies¹¹ wi' a swirl.

Nae doubt but they were fain¹² o' ither, 15
 An' unco pack an' thick thegither;
 Wi' social nose whyles¹³ snuff'd¹⁴ and snowket;
 Whyles mice and moudieworts¹⁵ they howket;¹⁶
 Whyles scour'd awa in lang excursion
 An' worry'd ither in diversion;¹⁷ 20
 Until wi' daffin weary grown,
 Upon a knowe¹⁸ they sat them down,
 An' there began a lang digression
 About the 'lords o' the creation.'

CÆSAR.

I've aften wondered, honest Luath, 25
 What sort o' life poor dogs like you have;

¹ fellow. ² Cuchullin's dog in Ossian's *Fingal*. — *B.* ³ wise. ⁴ leaped.
⁵ ditch. ⁶ wall. ⁷ handsome. ⁸ with a white stripe down the
 face. ⁹ shaggy. ¹⁰ big and lusty. ¹¹ hips. ¹² fond.
¹³ sometimes. ¹⁴ scented. ¹⁵ moles. ¹⁶ dug up. ¹⁷ romping.
¹⁸ knoll.

And when the gentry's life I saw,
What way poor bodies liv'd ava.¹

Our laird gets in his racket rents,
His coals; his kain,² and a' his stents;³
5 He rises when he likes himsel;
His flunkies answer at the bell;
He ca's his coach, he ca's his horse;
He draws a bonie silken purse
As lang's my tail, where through the steeks⁴
10 The yellow-lettered Geordie keeks.⁵

Frae morn to e'en it's nought but toilin,
At bakin, roastin, fryin, boilin;
And though the gentry first are stechin,⁶
Yet ev'n the ha'-folk⁷ fill their pechan⁸
15 Wi' sauce, ragouts, an' sic like trashtrie,
That's little short o' downright wastrie.
Our whipper-in, wee blastit wonner,⁹
Poor worthless elf, it eats a dinner
Better than ony tenant man
20 His Honour has in a' the lan';
And what poor cot-folk pit¹⁰ their painch¹¹ in,
I own it's past my comprehension.

LUATH.

Trowth, Cæsar, whiles they're fash't¹² eneugh;
A cotter howkin¹³ in a sheugh,¹⁴
25 Wi' dirty stanes biggin¹⁵ a dyke,¹⁶
Barin a quarry, and sic like;

¹ at all. ² farm produce paid as rent. ³ taxes. ⁴ stitches. ⁵ guinea
peeps. ⁶ stuffing. ⁷ kitchen people. ⁸ belly. ⁹ shrivelled-up
wonder. ¹⁰ put. ¹¹ stomach. ¹² troubled. ¹³ digging.
¹⁴ ditch. ¹⁵ building. ¹⁶ wall.

Himsel, a wife, he thus sustains,
A smytrie o' wee duddie weans,¹
And nought but his han'-daurg² to keep
Them right and tight in thack and rape.³

And when they meet wi' sair disasters, 5
Like loss o' health or want o' masters,
Ye maist wad think, a wee touch langer,
And they maun starve o' cauld and hunger;
But how it comes, I never kenn'd yet,
They're maistly wonderfu' contented: 10
And buirdly chiels⁴ an' clever hizzies⁵
Are bred in sic a way as this is.

CÆSAR.

But then to see how you're neglecket,
How huff'd and cuff'd and disrespecket!
Lord, man, our gentry care as little 15
For delvers, ditchers and sic cattle;
They gang as saucy by poor folk,
As I wad by a stinkin brock.⁶

I've noticed, on our Laird's court-day, —⁷
And mony a time my heart's been wae, — 20
Poor tenant bodies, scant o' cash,
How they maun thole⁸ a factor's snash:⁹
He'll stamp and threaten, curse, and swear
He'll apprehend them, poind¹⁰ their gear;¹¹

¹ a number of little ragged children. ² single-handed day's labor. ³ thatch
and rope to bind it, *i.e.*, "the necessities of life." ⁴ stalwart men.
⁵ women. ⁶ badger. ⁷ The factor is the landlord's agent, to whom
on court-day the tenants pay their rent. ⁸ endure. ⁹ abuse.
¹⁰ in pound. ¹¹ goods.

While they maun stan' wi' aspect humble,
And hear it a', and fear and tremble !

I see how folk live that hae riches ;
But surely poor folk maun be wretches !

LUATH.

5 They're no sae wretched's ane wad think :
 Tho' constantly on poortith's¹ brink,
 They're sae accustom'd wi' the sight,
 The view o't gies them little fright.

 Then chance and fortune are sae guided,
10 They're aye in less or mair provided ;
 And tho' fatigu'd wi' close employment,
 A blink o' rest's a sweet enjoyment.

 The dearest comfort o' their lives,
 Their grushie weans² and faithfu' wives ;
15 The prattling things are just their pride,
 That sweetens a' their fireside.

 And whiles twalpennie worth o' nappy³
 Can mak the bodies unco⁴ happy :
 They lay aside their private cares,
20 To mind the Kirk and State affairs ;
 They'll talk o' patronage an' priests,
 Wi' kindling fury i' their breasts,
 Or tell what new taxation's comin,
 An' ferlie⁵ at the folk in Lon'on.

25 As bleak-fac'd Hallowmas returns,
 They get the jovial, ranting kirns,⁶

¹ poverty.² thriving children.³ ale.⁴ very.⁵ wonder.⁶ the merry harvest-home rejoicings ; rustic feasts.

When rural life o' ev'ry station
Unite in common recreation;
Love blinks, Wit slaps,¹ an' social Mirth
Forgets there's Care upo' the earth.

That merry day the year begins, 5
They bar the door on frosty winds;
The nappy reeks² wi' mantlin ream³
An' sheds a heart-inspirin steam;
The luntin⁴ pipe an' sneeshin mill⁵
Are handed round wi' right guid will; 10
The cantie⁶ auld folks crackin crouse,⁷
The young anes rantin⁸ thro' the house, —
My heart has been sae fain to see them,
That I for joy hae barked wi' them.

Still it's owre true that ye hae said, 15
Sic game is now owre aften play'd.
There's monie a creditable stock
O' decent, honest, fawsont⁹ folk
Are riven¹⁰ out baith root an' branch,
Some rascal's pridefu' greed to quench, 20
Wha thinks to knit himsel the faster
In favour wi' some gentle master,¹¹
Wha, aiblins thrang a-parliamentin,¹²
For Britain's guid his saul¹³ indentin —

CÆSAR.

Haith,¹⁴ lad, ye little ken about it; 25
For Britain's guid! guid faith! I doubt it.

¹ shines forth. ² ale smokes. ³ froth. ⁴ smoking. ⁵ snuffbox. ⁶ cheery.
⁷ talking briskly. ⁸ frolicking. ⁹ seemly. ¹⁰ torn. ¹¹ master of
gentle birth; the laird. The rascal is the factor. ¹² perhaps busy in
Parliament. ¹³ soul. ¹⁴ faith.

Say rather, gaun¹ as Premiers lead him,
 An' saying *ay* or *no*'s they bid him :
 At operas an' plays parading,
 Mortgaging, gambling, masquerading :
 5 Or maybe, in a frolic daft,²
 To Hague or Calais taks a waft,
 To mak a tour an' tak a whirl
 To learn *bon ton* an' see the worl'.

There, at Vienna or Versailles,
 10 He rives his father's auld entails ;³
 Or by Madrid he taks the rout⁴
 To thrum guitars an' fecht⁵ wi' nowt ;⁶
 Or down Italian vista startles,
 Whore-hunting amang groves o' myrtles ;
 15 Then bouses drumly⁷ German-water,
 To mak himsel look fair and fatter,
 And clear the consequential sorrows,
 Love-gifts of Carnival signoras.

For Britain's guid ! — for her destruction !
 20 Wi' dissipation, feud, and faction.

LUATH.

Hech man ! dear sirs ! is that the gate⁸
 They waste sae mony a braw⁹ estate ?
 Are we sae foughten¹⁰ and harass'd
 For gear¹¹ to gang that gate¹² at last ?

¹ going. ² mad. ³ Entailed real estate in Britain must pass to the next male heir. An entail can be broken by an act of Parliament. Burns here refers, says Wallace, to an extravagant heir who would rive (literally "tear") the entail so that he might burden the estate with debt.
⁴ road. ⁵ fight. ⁶ bullocks. The word "nowt" [cattle, neat] takes all the romance from bull-fighting. — Dow. ⁷ drinks muddy. ⁸ style.
⁹ fine. ¹⁰ troubled. ¹¹ wealth. ¹² road.

O would they stay aback frae courts
 An' please themsels wi' countra sports,
 It wad for ev'ry ane be better,
 The Laird, the Tenant, an' the Cotter !
 For thae frank, rantin, ramblin billies, 5
 Fient haet ¹ o' them 's ill-hearted fellows :
 Except for breakin o' their timmer,²
 Or speakin lightly o' their limmer,³
 Or shootin o' a hare or moor-cock,
 The ne'er-a-bit they're ill to poor folk. 10

But will ye tell me, Master Cæsar,
 Sure great folk's life 's a life o' pleasure ?
 Nae could nor hunger e'er can steer ⁴ them,
 The vera thought o't need na fear them.

CÆSAR.

Lord, man, were ye but whyles whare I am, 15
 The gentles ye wad ne'er envy 'em.

It's true, they need na starve or sweat
 Thro' winter's cauld or simmer's heat ;
 They've nae sair wark to craze their banes,
 An' fill auld age wi' grips an' granes : ⁵ 20
 But human bodies are sic fools,
 For a' their colleges and schools,
 That when nae real ills perplex them,
 They mak enow themselves to vex them ;
 An' ay the less they hae to sturt ⁶ them, 25
 In like proportion less will hurt them.

A country fellow at the pleugh,
 His acres till'd, he's right enough ;

not a bit.

² cutting down their timber.

³ hussy.

⁴ bother.

⁵ groans.

⁶ trouble.

A country girl at her wheel,
 Her dizzens¹ done, she's unco weel:
 But gentlemen, an' ladies warst,
 Wi' ev'n down want o' wark are curst.
 5 They loiter, loungin, lank, an' lazy;
 Tho' deil-haet² ails them, yet uneasy:
 Their days insipid, dull, an' tasteless;
 Their nights unquiet, lang, an' restless;

 An' ev'n their sports, their balls an' races,
 10 Their galloping thro' public places, —
 There's sic parade, sic pomp, an' art,
 The joy can scarcely reach the heart.

The men cast out in party-matches,³
 Then sowther⁴ a' in deep debauches.
 15 Ae night, they're mad wi' drink an' whoring,
 Niest⁵ day their life is past enduring.

The Ladies arm-in-arm in clusters,
 As great an' gracious a' as sisters;
 But hear their absent thoughts o' ither,
 20 They're a' run deils an' jads⁶ thegither.
 Whiles,⁷ o'er the wee bit cup and platie,
 They sip the scandal-potion pretty;
 Or lee-lang⁸ nights, wi' crabbet⁹ leuks,
 Pore owre the devil's pictur'd beuks;¹⁰
 25 Stake on a chance a farmer's stackyard,¹¹
 And cheat like ony unhang'd blackguard.

There's some exceptions, man an' woman;
 But this is gentry's life in common.

1 "dozens" of hanks of thread to be wound for weaving. — *Dow.* 2 nothing.
 3 quarrel. 4 reconcile. 5 next. 6 downright devils and wicked
 women. 7 sometimes. 8 livelong. 9 sour. 10 cards. 11 *I.e.*, the
 value of a whole year's crop. — *Dow.*

By this, the sun was out o' sight,
 And darker gloaming brought the night :
 The bum-clock ¹ humm'd wi' lazy drone ; ²
 The kye ³ stood rowtin ⁴ i' the loan ; ⁵
 When up they gat, and shook their lugs, ⁶ 5
 Rejoic'd they were na *men* but *dogs* ;
 And each took aff his several way,
 Resolv'd to meet some ither day.

Cæsar gave the cotter's dog considerable enlightening information — enough, one would think, to satisfy him that 10 the cotter's lot was by no means to be despised ; but, real dogs as they are, they go off rejoicing that they are not men.

That Burns gets the point of view of man, beast, or demon ; that his sympathy is boundless, is most pointedly 15 suggested by these lines to the deil :

But fare you weel, auld Nickie-ben !
 O wad ye tak a thought an' men' !
 Ye aiblins might — I dinna ken —
 Still hae a stake : 20
 I 'm wae to think upo' yon den,
 Ev'n for your sake !

In 1786 Burns contracted with Jean Armour a marriage which, though irregular, he considered legal ; but her 25 parents, who would not listen to the union, did all they could to keep husband and wife apart. Burns felt disgraced ; it was a critical period ; painfully conscious of his faults, yet keenly alive to his temptations, he felt the need of pleading his own cause in an

¹ beetle. ² "The beetle wheels his droning flight" in Gray's *Elegy*.
³ cows. ⁴ lowing. ⁵ 'Loan' means here an opening between fields of corn near, or leading to, the homestead, where cows are milked. — Wallace.
⁶ ears.

ADDRESS TO THE UNCO GUID, OR THE RIGIDLY RIGHTEOUS.

My son, these maxims make a rule,
And lump them aye thegither;
The RIGID RIGHTEOUS is a fool,
The RIGID WISE anither:
The cleanest corn that e'er was dight,¹
May hae some pyles o' caff in;²
So ne'er a fellow-creature slight
For random fits o' daffin.³ — SOLOMON, Eccles. vii, 16.

O YE wha are sae guid yoursel,
Sae pious and sae holy,
Ye've nought to do but mark and tell
Your neibour's fauts and folly!
5 Whase life is like a well-gaun mill,
Supply'd wi' store o' water,
The heapet happer's⁴ ebbing still,
And still the clap plays clatter, —

Here me, ye venerable core,⁵
10 As counsel for poor mortals,
That frequent pass douce⁶ Wisdom's door
For glaiket⁷ Folly's portals;
I for their thoughtless, careless sakes
Would here propone defences —
15 Their donsie⁸ tricks, their black mistakes,
Their failings and mischances.

Ye see your state wi' theirs compar'd,
And shudder at the niffer;⁹
But cast a moment's fair regard,
20 What maks the mighty differ?

¹ thrashed. ² grains of chaff. ³ merriment, folly. ⁴ hopper. ⁵ fo
⁶ grave. ⁷ giddy. ⁸ wicked. ⁹ exchange.

Discount what scant occasion gave,
That purity ye pride in,
And (what's aft mair than a' the lave¹)
Your better art o' hidin.

Think, when your castigated pulse 5
Gies now and then a wallop,²
What ragings must his veins convulse
That still eternal gallop :
Wi' wind and tide fair i' your tail,
Right on ye scud your sea-way ; 10
But in the teeth o' baith to sail,
It maks an unco³ leeway.

See Social Life and Glee sit down,
All joyous and unthinking,
Till, quite transmugrify'd, they're grown 15
Debauchery and Drinking :
O would they stay to calculate
Th' eternal consequences ;
Or — your more dreaded hell to state —
Damnation of expenses ! 20

Ye high, exalted, virtuous Dames,
Tied up in godly laces,
Before you gie poor Frailty names,
Suppose a change o' cases :
A dear lov'd lad, convenience snug, 25
A treacherous inclination —
But, let me whisper i' your lug,⁴
Ye're aiblins⁵ nae temptation.

Then gently scan your brother man,
Still gentler sister woman ; 30

¹ rest. ² quick, agitated movement. ³ unusual. ⁴ ear. ⁵ perhaps.

Tho' they may gang a kennin¹ wrang,
 To step aside is human :
 One point must still be greatly dark,
 The moving *Why* they do it ;
 5 And just as lamely can ye mark,
 How far perhaps they rue it.

Who made the heart, 't is He alone
 Decidedly can try us,
 He knows each chord, its various tone,
 10 Each spring, its various bias :
 Then at the balance, let's be mute,
 We never can adjust it ;
 What's *done* we partly can compute,
 But know not what's *resisted*.

15 Has he not stated the case so well that we do not need
 to speak in his behalf ?

Those of us who are in the habit of thinking we are
 "unco guid" may well consider that we are somewhat
 "indebted to the world's good opinion because the world
 20 does not know all." Robert Louis Stevenson, whose plain
 statements of disagreeable truths about Burns never sug-
 gest that he is winking at weaknesses, says : "Alas ! I
 fear every man and woman of us is 'greatly dark' to all
 their neighbours, from the day of birth until death re-
 25 moves them, in their greatest virtues as well as in their
 saddest faults ; and we, who have been trying to read the
 character of Burns, may take home the lesson and be
 gentle in our thoughts."

Ewe, mare, dog and field-mouse had in turn been cele-
 30 brated by the poet. That he should recognize the louse as

¹ a little bit.

a fit subject for verse has distressed some persons, but one needs the entire poem in order to appreciate the immortal last stanza.

TO A LOUSE.

ON SEEING ONE ON A LADY'S BONNET AT CHURCH.

HA ! whaur ye gaun, ye crowlin' ferlie !¹
 Your impudence protects you sairlye ;² 5
 I canna say but ye strunt³ rarely
 Owre gauze and lace ;
 Tho' faith ! I fear ye dine but sparely
 On sic a place.

Ye ugly, creepin', blastet wonner,⁴ 10
 Detested, shunn'd by saunt an' sinner,
 How daur ye set your fit⁵ upon her,
 Sae fine a lady ?
 Gae somewhere else and seek your dinner
 On some poor body. 15

Swith !⁶ in some beggar's hauffet⁷ squattle,⁸
 Wi' ither kindred, jumping cattle,
 There ye may creep, an' sprawl, an' sprattle,⁹
 In shoals and nations ;
 Whaur horn¹⁰ or bane ne'er dare unsettle 20
 Your thick plantations.

Now haud you there, ye're out o' sight,
 Below the fatt'rells,¹¹ snug an' tight ;
 Na, faith ye yet ! ye'll no be right

¹ Where are you going, you crawling wonder? ² marvellously. ³ strut.
⁴ blasted wonder. ⁵ foot. ⁶ begone! ⁷ side of the head. ⁸ sprawl.
⁹ scramble. ¹⁰ comb. ¹¹ ribbon ends.

Till ye 've got on it —
 The vera tapmost, towrin' height
 O' Miss's bonnet.

My sooth ! right bauld ¹ ye set your nose out,
 5 As plump an' grey as ony groset : ²
 O for some rank, mercurial rozet, ³
 Or fell, red smeddum, ⁴
 I'd gie ye sic a hearty dose o't,
 Wad dress your droddum ! ⁵

10 I wad na been surpris'd to spy
 You on an auld wife's flannen toy ; ⁶
 Or aiblins ' some bit duddie ⁷ boy,
 On 's wyliecoat ; ⁸
 But Miss's fine Lunardi ! ¹⁰ fye !
 15 How daur ye do 't ?

O Jeany, dinna toss your head,
 An' set your beauties a' abreid ! ¹¹
 Ye little ken what cursed speed
 The blastie 's ¹² makin' :
 20 Thae winks an' finger-ends, I dread,
 Are notice takin. ¹³

O wad some Power the giftie gie us
 To see oursels as ithers see us !
 It wad frae mony a blunder free us,
 25 An' foolish notion :
 What airs in dress an' gait wad lea'e us,
 And ev'n devotion !

¹ bold. ² gooseberry. ³ rosin. ⁴ powder. ⁵ breech. ⁶ old-fashioned cap.
⁷ perhaps. ⁸ little ragged. ⁹ flannel vest. ¹⁰ balloon-shaped bonnet.
¹¹ abroad. ¹² as in the second stanza, a term of contempt ; strictly,
 "withered dwarf." ¹³ "I fear, from the way folk are winking and
 pointing in your direction, that they see what is the matter!"—Wallace.

Of course a man who habitually went out into the fields to compose his poetry could not ignore inanimate nature. If the subject of the following verses calls to mind Wordsworth's poems to the daisy and other flowers, we should remember that the Scottish plowman sang to his daisy first.

TO A MOUNTAIN DAISY.

ON TURNING ONE DOWN WITH THE PLOUGH, IN APRIL, 1786.

WEE, modest, crimson-tippèd flow'r,
 Thou 's met me in an evil hour;
 For I maun crush amang the stoure¹
 Thy slender stem :
 To spare thee now is past my pow'r,
 Thou bonie gem.

Alas! it's no thy neibor sweet,
The bonie lark, companion meet,
Bending thee 'mang the dewy weet² 15
 Wi' spreckl'd breast,
When upward-springing, blythe, to greet
 The purpling east.

Could blew the bitter-biting north
 Upon thy early, humble birth ;
 Yet cheerfully thou glinted forth
 Amid the storm,
 Scarce rear'd above the parent-earth
 Thy tender form.

The flaunting flowers our gardens yield 25
High shelt'ring woods an' wa's^s maun shield :

1 dust. 2 wet. 8 walls.

But thou, beneath the random bield¹
 O' clod or stane,
 Adorns the histie² stibble³-field
 Unseen, alane.

5 There, in thy scanty mantle clad,
 Thy snawie⁴ bosom sun-ward spread,
 Thou lifts thy unassuming head
 In humble guise;
 But now the share uptears thy bed,
 10 And low thou lies !

Such is the fate of artless maid,
 Sweet flow'ret of the rural shade !
 By love's simplicity betray'd
 And guileless trust ;
 15 Till she, like thee, all soil'd, is laid
 Low i' the dust.

Such is the fate of simple bard,
 On life's rough ocean luckless starr'd !
 Unskilful he to note the card⁵
 Of prudent lore,
 20 Till billows rage and gales blow hard,
 And whelm him o'er !

Such fate to suffering Worth is giv'n,
 Who long with wants and woes has striv'n,
 25 By human pride or cunning driv'n
 To mis'ry's brink ;
 Till, wrench'd of ev'ry stay but Heav'n,
 He ruin'd sink !

¹ shelter. ² barren. ³ stubble. ⁴ snowy. ⁵ chart. "Reason the
 card, but passion is the gale." — *Pope*.

Ev'n thou who mourn'st the Daisy's fate,
 That fate is thine — no distant date ;
 Stern Ruin's ploughshare drives elate,
 Full on thy bloom,
 Till crush'd beneath the furrow's weight
 Shall be thy doom.

Burns was having a hard fight. The Mossgiel farming had proved a failure. It looked as if Jean had deserted him once for all and as if the marriage was annulled. With wounded pride he looked for 'another wife' and soon won the heart of Mary Campbell, of whom we know through tradition only. (See "Highland Mary" and "To Mary in Heaven.") This year, too, Burns had been censured by the kirk. The result was his satires on the Auld Licht clergy, which in turn met with local favor enough to encourage him to continue his writing. It seemed best to leave Scotland for the Indies, and he published a collection of poems to pay the expenses of the journey. The last poem in the volume speaks for itself as a revelation of the poet's heart of hearts :

A BARD'S EPITAPH.

Is there a whim-inspirèd fool,
Owre fast for thought, owre hot for rule,
Owre blate¹ to seek, owre proud to snool?²—
Let him draw near;
And owre this grassy heap sing dool,³
And drap a tear.

Is there a bard of rustic song
Who, noteless, steals the crowds among,

¹ bashful. ² submit tamely. ³ lament.

That weekly this aréa throng? —

Oh, pass not by!

But with a frater-feeling strong,

Here heave a sigh.

5 Is there a man whose judgment clear
Can others teach the course to steer,
Yet runs himself life's mad career
Wild as the wave? —
Here pause — and, thro' the starting tear
10 Survey this grave.

The poor inhabitant below
Was quick to learn and wise to know,
And keenly felt the friendly glow,
And softer flame;
15 But thoughtless follies laid him low,
And stain'd his name!

Reader, attend! whether thy soul
Soars fancy's flights beyond the pole,
Or darkling grubs this earthly hole
20 In low pursuit;
Know, prudent, cautious self-control
Is wisdom's root.

After a man has written such an epitaph for himself —
so frankly disclosing and confessing his faults — it would
25 seem to be in good taste for the critics to save their
severest condemnation for one who is not so keenly
sensible of his shortcomings.

Soon afterward Burns met for the first time a member of
the British aristocracy. Lord Daer so pleasantly surprised
30 him that he at once acknowledged the unexpected in the

LINES ON AN INTERVIEW WITH LORD DAER.

THIS wot ye all whom it concerns,
 I, Rhymer Robin, alias Burns,
 October twenty-third,
 A ne'er-to-be-forgotten day,
 Sae far I sprachled¹ up the brae,² 5
 I dinner'd wi' a Lord.

I've been at drucken³ writers' feasts,
 Nay, been bitch-fou 'mang godly priests —
 Wi' rev'rence be it spoken! —
 I've even join'd the honour'd jorum,⁴ 10
 When mighty Squireships of the Quorum⁵
 Their hydra drouth⁶ did sloken.⁷

But wi' a Lord — stand out my shin!⁸
 A Lord — a Peer — an Earl's son!
 Up higher yet, my bonnet! 15
 And sic a Lord — lang Scotch ells twa,⁹
 Our Peerage he o'erlooks them a',
 As I look owre my sonnet.

But O for Hogarth's magic pow'r
 To show Sir Bardie's willyart glow'r,¹⁰ 20
 And how he star'd and stammer'd,
 When goavan,¹¹ as if led wi' branks,¹²
 An' stumpin on his ploughman shanks,
 He in the parlor hammer'd!

¹ scrambled. ² hill. ³ drunken. ⁴ punch-bowl. ⁵ some board or committee representing the country gentlemen of Ayrshire. — *Wallace*.
⁶ thirst. ⁷ slake. ⁸ as in a pompous stage-strut. — *Dow*. ⁹ six feet tall. ¹⁰ bewildered gaze. ¹¹ staring stupidly. ¹² bridle.

I sidling shelter'd in a nook,
An' at his Lordship steal't a look,
Like some portentous omen ;
Except good sense and social glee,
5 An' (what surprised me) modesty,
I markèd nought uncommon.

I watch'd the symptoms o' the great,
The gentle pride, the lordly state,
The arrogant assuming :
10 The fient a pride, nae pride had he,¹
Nor sauce nor state that I could see,
Mair than an honest ploughman.

Then from his lordship I shall learn,
Henceforth to meet with unconcern
15 One rank as weel 's another :
Nae honest worthy man need care
To meet with noble youthful Daer,
For he but meets a brother.

The first volume was welcomed so heartily that Burns
20 decided to remain on old Scotia's shores. He had
attracted attention enough to make him more ambitious
than ever for distinction as a poet ; he must go to Edin-
burgh. A few days before starting he sent these lines
to a gentleman in Ayr :

¹ ' Devil a bit of pride had he.'

A WINTER NIGHT.

Poor naked wretches, wheresoe'er you are,
That bide the pelting of this pitiless storm!
How shall your houseless heads and unfed sides,
Your loop'd and window'd raggedness, defend you
From seasons such as these?

SHAKESPEARE.

WHEN biting Boreas, fell¹ and doure,²
Sharp shivers thro' the leafless bow'r;
When Phœbus gies a short lived glow'r³

Far south the lift,⁴
Dim-darkening thro' the flaky show'r 5
Or whirling drift;

Ae night the storm the steeples rocked,
Poor Labour sweet in sleep was locked,
While burns,⁵ wi' snawy wreaths up-choked,
Wild-eddying swirl, 10
Or, thro' the mining outlet bocked,⁶
Down headlong hurl:

Listening the doors and winnocks⁷ rattle,
I thought me on the ourie⁸ cattle,
Or silly⁹ sheep, wha bide this brattle¹⁰ 15
O' winter war,
An' through the drift, deep-lairing,¹¹ sprattle¹²
Beneath a scaur.¹³

Ilk happin¹⁴ bird — wee, helpless thing! —
That in the merry months o' spring 20
Delighted me to hear thee sing,
What comes o' thee?

¹ keen. ² stubborn. ³ stare. ⁴ sky. ⁵ brooks. ⁶ belched. ⁷ windows.
⁸ shivering. ⁹ helpless. ¹⁰ pelting. ¹¹ sinking deep. ¹² scramble.
¹³ cliff. ¹⁴ hopping.

Whare wilt thou cow'r thy chittering¹ wing
An' close thy ee?

Ev'n you on murd'ring errands toil'd,
Lone from your savage homes exil'd, —
5 The blood-stain'd roost an' sheep-cot spoil'd
My heart forgets,
While pitiless the tempest wild
Sore on you beats.

Now Phœbe,² in her midnight reign,
10 Dark muffled, viewed the dreary plain ;
Still crowding thoughts, a pensive train,
Rose in my soul,
When on my ear this plaintive strain,
Slow-solemn, stole : —

15 " Blow, blow ye winds with heavier gust !
And freeze, thou bitter-biting frost !
Descend, ye chilly, smothering snows !
Not all your rage, as now united, shows
More hard unkindness, unrelenting,
20 Vengeful malice, unrepenting,
Than heaven-illumined man on brother man bestows !³

" See stern Oppression's iron grip,
Or mad Ambition's gory hand,
Sending, like blood-hounds from the slip,
25 Woe, Want, and Murder o'er a land !

¹ shivering.

² the moon.

³ Cf. Blow, blow, thou winter wind,
Thou art not so unkind
As man's ingratitude ; . . .
Freeze, freeze, thou bitter sky,
That dost not bite so nigh

As benefits forgot. — *As You Like It*, IV. 7.

Ev'n in the peaceful rural vale,
 Truth, weeping, tells the mournful tale :
 How pamper'd Luxury, Flatt'ry by her side,
 The parasite empoisoning her ear,
 With all the servile wretches in the rear, 5
 Looks o'er proud Property, extended wide ;
 And eyes the simple, rustic hind,
 Whose toil upholds the glitt'ring show —
 A creature of another kind,
 Some coarser substance, unrefin'd — 10
 Plac'd for her lordly use, thus far, thus vile, below !

“ Where, where is Love's fond, tender throe,
 With lordly Honour's lofty brow,
 The pow'rs you proudly own ?
 Is there, beneath Love's noble name, 15
 Can harbour, dark, the selfish aim,
 To bless himself alone ?
 Mark Maiden-Innocence a prey
 To love-pretending snares :
 This boasted Honour turns away, 20
 Shunning soft Pity's rising sway,
 Regardless of the tears and unavailing pray'rs !
 Perhaps this hour, in Misery's squalid nest,
 She strains your infant to her joyless breast,
 And with a mother's fears shrinks at the rocking blast ! 25

“ O ye ! who, sunk in beds of down,
 Feel not a want but what yourselves create,
 Think, for a moment, on his wretched fate,
 Whom friends and fortune quite disown !
 Ill-satisfy'd keen nature's clam'rous call, 30
 Stretched on his straw, he lays himself to sleep ;
 While through the ragged roof and chinky wall,

- Chill, o'er his slumbers piles the drift^y heap!
 Think on the dunge^{on}'s grim confine,
 Where Guilt and poor Misfortune pine!
 Guilt, erring man, relenting view!
 5 But shall thy legal rage pursue
 The wretch, already crushèd low
 By cruel Fortune's undeservèd blow?
 Affliction's sons are brothers in distress;
 A brother to relieve, how exquisite the bliss!"
- 10 I heard nae mair, for chanticleer
 Shook off the pouthery¹ snaw,
 And hailed the morning with a cheer—
 A cottage-rousing crow.
- But deep this truth impress'd my mind—
 15 Through all His works abroad,
 The heart benevolent and kind
 The most resembles God.²

The difference between the Scottish and the English portions of the poem is striking. This is "the voice of
 20 Mercy herself," says Carlyle.

It was on the 28th of November, 1786, that Burns reached Edinburgh and began his triumphal winter. The following summer he traveled in Scotland; the Highlands set him to singing. One of these songs is

THE BANKS OF THE DEVON.

- 25 How pleasant the banks of the clear winding Devon,
 With green spreading bushes, and flowers blooming fair!

¹ *powdery*.

² *Cf.* "He prayeth best who loveth best" etc.

— *Ancient Mariner*

But the boniest flower on the banks of the Devon
 Was once a sweet bud on the braes¹ of the Ayr.²
 Mild be the sun on this sweet blushing flower,
 In the gay rosy morn as it bathes in the dew;
 And gentle the fall of the soft vernal shower,
 That steals on the evening each leaf to renew. 5

O spare the dear blossom, ye orient breezes,
 With chill hoary wing as ye usher the dawn !
 And far be thou distant, thou reptile that seizes
 The verdure and pride of the garden and lawn ! 10
 Let Bourbon exult in his gay gilded lilies,
 And England, triumphant, display her proud rose ;
 A fairer than either adorns the green valleys,
 Where Devon, sweet Devon, meandering flows.

In a letter to Miss Chalmers, Burns says : "The air 15
 is admirable : true old Highland. It was the tune of a
 Gaelic song which an Inverness lady sang me when I
 was there. . . . I won't say the poetry is first-rate ;
 though I am convinced it is very well : and what is not
 always the case with compliments to ladies, it is not only 20
sincere but just."

Another song which was a direct outcome of the High-
 land tour is

M'PHERSON'S FAREWELL.

FAREWELL, ye dungeons dark and strong,
 The wretch's destinie ! 25
 M'Pherson's time will not be long
 On yonder gallows tree.

¹ stipes. ² "Miss Charlotte Hamilton . . . was born on the banks of the Ayr,
 but was, at the time I wrote these lines, residing at Harvieston, on the
 romantic banks of the little river Devon." — B.

CHORUS. — Sae rantinly, sae wantonly,
 Sae dauntinly gaed he ;
 He play'd a spring¹ and danc'd it round,
 Below the gallows tree.

5 O what is death but parting breath? —
 On monie a bloody plain
 I've dar'd his face, and in this place
 I scorn him yet again !

 Untie these bands from off my hands
 10 And bring to me my sword,
 And there's no man in all Scotland,
 But I'll brave him at a word.

 I've liv'd a life of sturt² and strife ;
 I die by treacherie :
 15 It burns my heart I must depart
 And not avengèd be.

 Now farewell light, thou sunshine bright,
 And all beneath the sky !
 May coward shame distain³ his name,
 20 The wretch that dare not die !

James M'Pherson, a freebooter, who with his Gypsy followers terrified the Counties of Aberdeen, Moray, and Banff, was finally seized and condemned to be hanged. While in prison, it is said, he composed the wild air which
 25 prompted Burns to write this song.

The next winter, which was spent in Edinburgh, the worshipers were fewer and some of them far less *enthusiastic*. In the spring Burns leased a poor farm at

¹ piece of dance music. ² trouble. ³ stain.

Ellisland, and was regularly married to Jean Armour. While she was visiting his mother and sisters at Mossgiel and learning how to do her part of the work on the new farm, he was preparing the home. Meantime this is his song to her :

5

OF A' THE AIRTS THE WIND CAN BLAW.

Of a' the airts¹ the wind can blaw

I dearly like the west,

For there the bonie lassie lives,

The lassie I lo'e best :

There's wild woods grow an' rivers row,²

10

An' mony a hill between ;

But day and night my fancy's flight

Is ever wi' my Jean.

I see her in the dewy flow'rs,

I see her sweet an' fair :

15

I hear her in the tunefu' birds,

I hear her charm the air :

There's not a bonie flow'r that springs

By fountain, shaw,³ or green ;

There's not a bonie bird that sings,

20

But minds me o' my Jean.

And who, with or without an ear for music, does not like such singing?

Again winter had come, and it had brought Jean. As farmer and exciseman Burns struggled on. He sent Mrs. Dunlop

¹ directions. ² roll. ³ wood.

AULD LANG SYNE.

SHOULD auld acquaintance be forgot,
 And never brought to min' ?
 Should auld' acquaintance be forgot,
 And auld lang syne ?

5 CHORUS.— For auld lang syne, my dear,
 For auld lang syne,
 We'll tak a cup o' kindness yet
 For auld lang syne.

10 And surely ye'll be your pint-stowp,¹
 And surely I'll be mine !
 And we'll tak a cup o' kindness yet
 For auld lang syne.

We twa hae run about the braes,
 And pu'd the gowans fine ;²
 15 But we've wander'd mony a weary fit³
 Sin' auld lang syne.

We twa hae paidl't⁴ i' the burn,⁵
 From mornin' sun till dine ;⁶
 But seas between us braid⁷ hae roar'd
 20 Sin' auld lang syne.

And there's a hand, my trusty fier,⁸
 And gie's a hand o' thine ;
 And we'll tak a right guid-willie waught⁹
 For auld lang syne.

25 It is the favorite song at reunions among the Scots.
 Although there are several versions of it, Burns's work
 is conspicuous in his third and fourth stanzas.

¹ drinking vessel. ² pulled daisies. ³ foot. ⁴ paddled. ⁵ brook.
⁶ dinner-time. ⁷ broad. ⁸ comrade. ⁹ friendly draught.

In this connection it ought to be said that we are indebted to him for improving many an old song. One to which his re-working gave purity, life, and beauty is

JOHN ANDERSON MY JO.

JOHN ANDERSON my jo,¹ John,
 When we were first acquent, 5
 Your locks were like the raven,
 Your bonie² brow was brent;
 But now your brow is beld,³ John,
 Your locks are like the snaw;
 But blessings on your frosty pow,⁴ 10
 John Anderson my jo.

John Anderson my jo, John,
 We clamb the hill thegither;
 And monie a canty⁵ day, John,
 We've had wi' ane anither: 15
 Now we maun totter down, John,
 And hand in hand we'll go,
 And sleep thegither at the foot,
 John Anderson my jo.

The story of two long lives is told so briefly that a hasty glance is not likely to reveal the perfection of the little gem. As with the man John Anderson, acquaintance increases the liking.

In the illustration which accompanied the song in Thomson's work "the old couple are seated by the fire-
 side, the gude-wife in great good humor is clapping John's
 shoulder, while he smiles and looks at her with such glee
 as to show that he fully recollects the pleasant days when

¹ sweetheart. ² high and straight. ³ bald. ⁴ head. ⁵ happy.

they were 'first acquent.'" [Letter of Thomson to Burns, 1793.] On the other hand, Mr. Wallace says: "The pathos of life's evening will never find a happier or fuller expression." To me the poem does not suggest
 5 "great good humor," nor is the keynote pathos. Some of the lines may not be free from pathos, but the touch only heightens the happiness. It is thoughtful, serene, supreme happiness.

The air of the next song was Masterton's, Burns
 10 says; the song, his. "The occasion of it," he adds, "was this: Mr. William Nicol, of the High School, Edinburgh, during the autumn vacation being at Moffat, honest Allan [Masterton] and I went to pay Nicol a visit. We had such a joyous meeting that Mr. Masterton and I agreed,
 15 each in our own way, that we should celebrate the business."

WILLIE BREWED A PECK O' MAUT.

O, WILLIE brew'd a peck o' maut,¹
 An' Rob an' Allan cam to see:
 Three blyther hearts that lee-lang night
 20 Ye wad na found in Christendie.

CHORUS.—We are na fou, we're nae that fou,²
 But just a drappie³ in our ee;⁴
 The cock may crawl, the day may daw,⁵
 And aye we'll taste the barley bree.⁶

25 Here are we met, three merry boys,
 Three merry boys, I trow, are we;
 An' mony a night we've merry been,
 An mony mae⁷ we hope to be!

¹ maut. ² full. ³ drop. ⁴ eye. ⁵ dawn. ⁶ liquor. ⁷ more.

It is the moon, I ken her horn,
 That's blinkin¹ in the lift² sae hie;³
 She shines sae bright to wile us hame,
 But, by my sooth, she'll wait a wee!

Wha first shall rise to gang awa',
 A cuckold, coward loon⁴ is he!
 Wha first beside his chair shall fa',
 He is the king amang us three!

The following stanzas were written to Mary Campbell, whose lover he had become three years before.⁵ The 10
 third anniversary of her death saddened him. He spent
 most of the cold night wandering on the banks of the Nith
 and about his farmyard. Lockhart, in reporting a state-
 ment made by Jean Burns to a friend, says his wife finally
 found him "stretched on a mass of straw with his eyes 15
 fixed on a beautiful planet 'that shone like another moon'
 and prevailed on him to come in. He immediately . . .
 wrote . . . with all the ease of one copying from mem-
 ory, these sublime and pathetic verses":

TO MARY IN HEAVEN.

THOU ling'ring star, with less'ning ray,
 That lov'st to greet the early morn,
 Again thou usher'st in the day
 My Mary from my soul was torn.
 O Mary! dear departed shade!
 Where is thy place of blissful rest?
 See'st thou thy lover lowly laid?
 Hear'st thou the groans that rend his breast?

¹ gleaming. ² sky. ³ high. ⁴ fellow. ⁵ See introduction to
A Bard's Epitaph.

That sacred hour can I forget,
 Can I forget the hallowed grove,
 Where by the winding Ayr we met
 To live one day of parting love?
 5 Eternity will not efface
 Those records dear of transports past,
 Thy image at our last embrace —
 Ah ! little thought we 't was our last !

Ayr, gurgling, kiss'd his pebb'l'd shore,
 10 O'erhung with wild woods, thick'ning green ;
 The fragrant birch and hawthorn hoar
 Twin'd amorous round the raptur'd scene :
 The flow'rs sprang wanton to be prest,
 The birds sang love on every spray,
 15 Till too, too soon the glowing west
 Proclaim'd the speed of winged day.

Still o'er these scenes my mem'ry wakes,
 And fondly broods with miser care !
 Time but th' impression stronger makes,
 20 As streams their channels deeper wear.
 My Mary, dear departed shade !
 Where is thy place of blissful rest ?
 See'st thou thy lover lowly laid ?
 Hear'st thou the groans that rend his breast ?

25 While Captain Grose, the antiquary, was preparing his
Antiquities of Scotland, Burns asked him to include Allo-
 way Kirk, the burial-place of the poet's father, and the
 scene of many good witch stories. The captain agreed
 to make the drawing, provided Burns would furnish an
 30 *accompanying legend*. The result was that Burns wrote
three prose stories and turned one of them into

TAM O' SHANTER.

A TALE.

Of Brownys and of Bogillis full is this Buke. — GAWIN DOUGLAS.

WHEN chapman billies leave the street,¹
 And drouthy² neibors neibors meet,
 As market-days are wearing late,
 And folk begin to tak the gate;³
 While we sit bousin⁴ at the nappy,⁵ 5
 And gettin fou⁶ and unco happy,
 We think na on the lang Scots miles,
 The mosses, waters, slaps,⁷ and stiles,
 That lie between us and our hame,⁸
 Whare sits our sulky, sullen dame, 10
 Gathering her brows like gathering storm,
 Nursing her wrath to keep it warm.

This truth fand⁹ honest Tam o' Shanter,
 As he frae Ayr ae night did canter :
 (Auld Ayr, wham ne'er a town surpasses, 15
 For honest men and bonie lasses.)

O Tam ! had'st thou but been sae wise
 As taen thy ain wife Kate's advice!
 She tauld thee weel thou was a skellum,
 A bletherin, blusterin, drunken blellum; 20
 That frae November till October,
 Ae market-day⁹ thou was na sober;
 That ilka¹⁰ melder¹¹ wi' the miller,
 Thou sat as lang as thou had siller;

¹ When packman fellows, the sellers at the booths and stalls, leave the market. ² thirsty. ³ road. ⁴ drinking deeply. ⁵ ale. ⁶ full. ⁷ bogs. ⁸ found. ⁹ the weekly market. ¹⁰ every. ¹¹ the quantity of grain sent to the mill to be ground at one time.

That ev'ry naig¹ was ca'd a shoe on,²
 The smith and thee gat roarin fou on;
 That at the Lord's house, ev'n on Sunday,
 Thou drank wi' Kirkton³ Jean till Monday.
 5 She prophesied, that, late or soon,
 Thou would be found deep drown'd in Doon;
 Or catch't wi' warlocks⁴ in the mirk,⁵
 By Alloway's auld haunted kirk.

Ah, gentle dames! it gars⁶ me greet,⁷
 10 To think how mony counsels sweet,
 How mony lengthened sage advices,
 The husband frae the wife despises!

But to our tale: — Ae market night,
 Tam had got planted unco right,
 15 Fast by an ingle⁸ bleezin⁹ finely,
 Wi' reamin swats¹⁰ that drank divinely;
 And at his elbow, Souter¹¹ Johnie,
 His ancient, trusty, drouthy¹² crony:
 Tam lo'ed him like a vera brither;
 20 They had been fou for weeks thegither.
 The night drave on wi' sangs and clatter;
 And ay the ale was growing better:
 The landlady and Tam grew gracious
 Wi' secret favours, sweet, and precious:
 25 The souter tauld his queerest stories;
 The landlord's laugh was ready chorus:
 The storm without might rair¹³ and rustle,
 Tam did na mind the storm a whistle.

¹ nag. ² shod. ³ a common name for any country town that has a parish church. Here, perhaps, it means Kirkoswald, which claims the *originals* of all the characters in the poem. ⁴ wizards. ⁵ darkness.
⁶ makes. ⁷ weep. ⁸ fire. ⁹ blazing. ¹⁰ foaming ale. ¹¹ cobbler.
¹² thirsty. ¹³ roar.

Care, mad to see a man sae happy,
E'en drown'd himsel amang the nappy :
As bees flee hame wi' lades o' treasure,
The minutes wing'd their way wi' pleasure;
Kings may be blest, but Tam was glorious,
O'er a' the ills o' life victorious !

But pleasures are like poppies spread,
You seize the flow'r, its bloom is shed;
Or like the snow falls in the river,
A moment white — then melts for ever; 10
Or like the borealis race,
That flit e'er you can point their place;
Or like the rainbow's lovely form
Evanishing amid the storm.
Nae man can tether time or tide: 15
The hour approaches Tam maun ride,—
That hour, o' night's black arch the key-stane,
That dreary hour he mounts his beast in;
And sic a night he taks the road in,
As ne'er poor sinner was abroad in. 20

The wind blew as 't wad blawn its last ;
The rattling show'rs rose on the blast ;
The speedy gleams the darkness swallow'd ;
Loud, deep, and lang the thunder bellow'd :
That night, a child might understand, 25
The Deil had business on his hand.¹

Weel mounted on his gray mear,² Meg,
A better never lifted leg,

¹ Carlyle says that the "chasm between the Ayr public-house and the gate of Tophet"—between the natural and the supernatural—"is nowhere bridged over." It has been suggested that line 8, page 64, is the first link and that these two are the second. ² more.

Tam skelpit¹ on thro' dub² and mire,
 Despising wind and rain and fire;
 Whiles holding fast his guid blue bonnet,
 Whiles crooning o'er some auld Scots sonnet,
 5 Whiles glowrin round wi' prudent cares,
 Lest bogles catch him unawares.
 Kirk-Alloway was drawing nigh,
 Whare ghaists and houlets⁸ nightly cry.

By this time he was cross the ford,
 10 Whare in the snaw the chapman smoor'd;⁴
 And past the birks⁵ and meikle⁶ stane,
 Whare drucken Charlie brak's neck-bane;
 And thro' the whins,⁷ and by the cairn,⁸
 Whare hunters fand the murder'd bairn;
 15 And near the thorn, aboon the well,
 Whare Mungo's mither hang'd hersel.
 Before him Doon pours all his floods;
 The doubling storm roars thro' the woods;
 The lightnings flash from pole to pole,
 20 Near and more near the thunders roll;
 When, glimmering thro' the groaning trees,
 Kirk-Alloway⁹ seemed in a bleeze;
 Thro' ilka bore¹⁰ the beams were glancing,
 And loud resounded mirth and dancing.

25 Inspiring bold John Barleycorn!
 What dangers thou can'st make us scorn!
 Wi' tippenny¹¹ we fear nae evil;
 Wi' usquebae¹² we'll face the devil!

¹ rattled. ² puddle. ³ owls. ⁴ smothered. ⁵ birches. ⁶ big. ⁷ gorse.

⁸ pile of stones. ⁹ Burns was born within a few yards of this church.

Though deserted in his time, it was prominent in many of the stories of devils, ghosts, and witches told Burns by the superstitious old woman who lived in the family. Now it is a roofless ruin. ¹⁰ crevice.

¹¹ twopenny ale. ¹² whiskey.

The swats sae ream'd in Tammie's noddle,
 Fair play, he car'd na deils a boddle.
 But Maggie stood right sair astonish'd,
 Till, by the heel and hand admonish'd,
 She ventur'd forward on the light ; 5
 And, wow ! Tam saw an unco sight !

Warlocks¹ and witches in a dance ;
 Nae cotillon brent new² frae France,
 But hornpipes, jigs, strathspeys, and reels
 Put life and mettle in their heels : 10
 A winnock³ bunker⁴ in the east,
 There sat Auld Nick in shape o' beast ;
 A towzie tyke,⁵ black, grim, and large,
 To gie them music was his charge ;
 He screw'd the pipes⁶ and gart them skirl,⁷ 15
 Till roof and rafters a' did dirl.⁸ —
 Coffins stood round like open presses,
 That shaw'd the dead in their last dresses ;
 And by some devilish cantraip sleight⁹
 Each in its cauld hand held a light, 20
 By which heroic Tam was able
 To note upon the haly table¹⁰
 A murderer's banes in gibbet airns ;¹¹
 Twa span-lang, wee, unchristen'd bairns ;
 A thief, new-cutt'd frae the rape — 25
 Wi' his last gasp his gab¹² did gape ;
 Five tomahawks, wi' blude red-rusted ;
 Five scymitars, wi' murder crusted ;
 A garter, which a babe had strangled ;
 A knife, a father's throat had mangled, 30

¹ wizards. ² brand-new. ³ window. ⁴ recess. ⁵ shaggy dog. ⁶ bagpipes.
⁷ scream. ⁸ ring. ⁹ weird trick. ¹⁰ communion table. ¹¹ iron.
¹² mouth.

Whom his ain son o' life bereft —
 The gray hairs yet stack¹ to the heft;²
 Wi' mair o' horrible and awfu',³
 Which ev'n to name wad be unlawfu'.

5 As Tammie glowr'd, amaz'd and curious,
 The mirth and fun grew fast and furious:
 The piper loud and louder blew,
 The dancers quick and quicker flew;
 They reel'd, they set, they cross'd, they cleekit,⁴
 10 Till ilka carlin⁵ swat and reekit⁶
 And coost⁷ her duddies⁸ to the wark
 And linket at it⁹ in her sark!¹⁰

Now Tam, O Tam! had thae¹¹ been queans,¹²
 A' plump and strapping in their teens!
 15 Their sarks, instead o' creeshie flannen,¹³
 Been snaw-white seventeen hunder linen!¹⁴ —
 Thir¹⁵ breeks o' mine, my only pair,
 That ance were plush, o' gude blue hair,
 I wad hae gien them aff my hurdies,¹⁶
 20 For ae blink o' the bonie burdies!¹⁷

But wither'd beldams, auld and droll,
 Rigwoodie¹⁸ hags wad spean¹⁹ a foal,
 Lowping²⁰ and flinging on a crummock,²¹
 I wonder didna turn thy stomach.

25 But Tam ken'd what was what fu' brawlie;²²
 There was ae winsome wench and walie,²³

¹ stuck. ² handle. ³ Cf. *Macbeth*, IV, 1. ⁴ joined hands. ⁵ witch.
⁶ steamed. ⁷ threw off. ⁸ clothes. ⁹ set to it. ¹⁰ shift. ¹¹ those.
¹² young women. ¹³ greasy flannel. ¹⁴ very fine linen, woven in a
 reed of seventeen hundred divisions. ¹⁵ these. ¹⁶ hips. ¹⁷ damsels.
¹⁸ wizened. ¹⁹ wean. ²⁰ leaping. ²¹ staff with a crooked head.
²² very well. ²³ powerful.

That night enlisted in the core¹
 (Lang after ken'd on Carrick shore :
 For mony a beast to dead she shot,
 And perish'd mony a bonie boat,
 And shook baith meikle corn and bear,² 5
 And kept the country-side in fear) ;
 Her cutty sark o' Paisley harn,³
 That while a lassie she had worn,
 In longitude tho' sorely scanty,
 It was her best, and she was vauntie.⁴ 10
 Ah ! little kent thy reverend grannie,
 That sark she coft⁵ for her wee Nannie,
 Wi' twa pund Scots ('t was a' her riches),
 Wad ever graced a dance o' witches !

But here my Muse her wing maun cow'r,⁶ 15
 Sic flights are far beyond her pow'r ;
 To sing how Nannie lap and flang,⁷
 (A souple jad⁸ she was and strang,)
 And how Tam stood like ane bewitch'd,
 And thought his very een enrich'd ; 20
 Even Satan glowr'd⁹ and fidg'd fu' fain,
 And hotch'd¹⁰ and blew wi' might and main :
 Till first ae caper, syne¹¹ anither,
 Tam tint¹² his reason a' thegither,
 And roars out, " Weel done, Cutty-sark ! " 25
 And in an instant all was dark :
 And scarcely had he Maggie rallied,
 When out the hellish legion sallied.

As bees bizz out wi' angry fyke,¹³
 When plundering herds assail their byke ;¹⁴ 30

¹ company. ² barley. ³ short shift of coarse linen. ⁴ proud of it. ⁵ bought.
⁶ fold. ⁷ leaped and kicked. ⁸ lass. ⁹ gazed. ¹⁰ moved uneasily.
¹¹ then. ¹² lost. ¹³ fuss. ¹⁴ nest.

As open pussie's ¹ mortal foes,
 When, pop ! she starts before their nose ;
 As eager runs the market-crowd,
 When " Catch the thief ! " resounds aloud ;
 5 So Maggie runs, the witches follow,
 Wi' mony an eldritch ² skrieach and hollo.

Ah, Tam ! ah, Tam ! thou'll get thy fairin ! ³
 In hell they'll roast thee like a herrin !
 In vain thy Kate awaits thy comin !
 10 Kate soon will be a woefu' woman !
 Now, do thy speedy utmost, Meg,
 And win the key-stane ⁴ of the brig :
 There at them thou thy tail may toss,
 A running stream they dare na cross.
 15 But ere the key-stane she could make,
 The fient a tail she had to shake !
 For Nannie, far before the rest,
 Hard upon noble Maggie prest,
 And flew at Tam wi' furious ettle ; ⁵
 20 But little wist she Maggie's mettle —
 Ae spring brought aff her master hale,
 But left behind her ain gray tail :
 The carlin ⁶ clought ⁷ her by the rump,
 And left poor Maggie scarce a stump.

25 Now, wha this tale o' truth shall read,
 Ilk man and mother's son, take heed,

¹ the hare's. ² unearthly. ³ reward. ⁴ It is a well known fact that witches, or any evil spirits, have no power to follow a poor wight any farther than the middle of the next running stream. It may be proper likewise to mention to the benighted traveller, that when he falls in with bogles, whatever danger may be in his going forward, there is much more hazard in turning back. — B. ⁵ aim. ⁶ witch. ⁷ clutched.

Whene'er to drink you are inclin'd,
Or cutty-sarks run in your mind,
Think, ye may buy the joys owre dear,
Remember Tam o' Shanter's mear.¹

"*Tam o' Shanter*," says Burns, "is my first essay in the way of telling a tale." It is his only tale and in the opinion of Scott, Lockhart, Burns himself, and perhaps a majority of Scots, his masterpiece. It is said to have been written in one day. Carlyle says it is "the best day's work done in Scotland since Bannockburn." 10

A lyric that needs no comment is

BONIE DOON.

YE flowery banks o' bonie Doon,
How can ye blume sae fair?
How can ye chant, ye little birds,
And I sae fu' o' care? 15

Thou 'll break my heart, thou bonie bird,
That sings upon the bough;
Thou minds me o' the happy days,
When my fause luv was true.

Thou 'll break my heart, thou bonie bird, 20
That sings beside thy mate;
For sae I sat, and sae I sang,
And wist na o' my fate.

¹ It is interesting to compare the ending of the prose version: "However, the unsightly, tail-less condition of the vigorous steed was to the last hour of the noble creature's life an awful warning to all Carrick farmers not to stay too late in Ayr markets."

Aft hae I rov'd by bonie Doon
 To see the wood-bine twine,
 And ilka ¹ bird sang o' its luve,
 And sae did I o' mine.

5 Wi' lightsome heart I pu'd a rose
 Frae aff its thorny tree;
 And my fause luver staw ² my rose
 But left the thorn wi' me.

The result is so good that one may be surprised to learn
 10 from Mr. Scott Douglas that the poet's aim in composing
 "this most popular of his songs" was merely to fit a particular
 tune with suitable words.

Again, we do not know the heroine of

FLOW GENTLY, SWEET AFTON.

Flow gently, sweet Afton, among thy green braes,³
 15 Flow gently, I'll sing thee a song in thy praise;
 My Mary's asleep by thy murmuring stream,
 Flow gently, sweet Afton, disturb not her dream.

Thou stock-dove whose echo resounds thro' the glen,
 Ye wild whistling blackbirds in yon thorny den,
 20 Thou green-crested lapwing, thy screaming forbear,
 I charge you disturb not my slumbering fair.

How lofty, sweet Afton, thy neighbouring hills,
 Far mark'd with the courses of clear winding rills;
 There daily I wander as noon rises high,
 25 *My flocks* and my Mary's sweet cot in my eye.

¹ every.

² stole.

³ slopes.

How pleasant thy banks and green valleys below,
Where wild in the woodlands the primroses blow;
There oft, as mild Evening weeps over the lea,
The sweet-scented birk¹ shades my Mary and me.

Thy crystal stream, Afton, how lovely it glides, 5
And winds by the cot where my Mary resides;
How wanton thy waters her snowy feet lave,
As gathering sweet flow'rets she stems thy clear wave.

Flow gently, sweet Afton, among thy green braes,
Flow gently, sweet river, the theme of my lays; 10
My Mary's asleep by thy murmuring stream,
Flow gently, sweet Afton, disturb not her dream.

It is not difficult to understand Mr. Douglas's note:
"A kind of holy calm pervades the soul of the reader
who peruses, or the auditor who listens to the music of 15
this unique strain. The 'pastoral melancholy' which
Wordsworth felt at St. Mary's Loch steals over his heart
and laps him in a dreamy elysium of sympathetic repose."

In 1787-8, before Burns's regular marriage with Jean
Armour, he had become acquainted with Mrs. Maclehose. 20
They found each other most fascinating. Their lively
correspondence came to an abrupt end, however, when
Burns told her of his coming marriage. In 1791 they
met again in time for Burns to bid her farewell before she
sailed to the West Indies. Soon afterward he sent her 25
the poem

¹ birch.

Æ FOND KISS.

Æ fond kiss, and then we sever;
 Æ fareweel, and then for ever!
 Deep in heart-wrung tears I'll pledge thee,
 Warring sighs and groans I'll wage thee.
 5 Who shall say that Fortune grieves him,
 While the star of hope she leaves him?
 Me, nae cheerfu' twinkle lights me;
 Dark despair around benights me.

I'll ne'er blame my partial fancy,
 10 Naething could resist my Nancy;
 But to see her was to love her;
 Love but her, and love for ever.
 Had we never lov'd sae kindly,
 Had we never lov'd sae blindly,
 15 Never met — or never parted —
 We had ne'er been broken-hearted.

Fare thee weel, thou first and fairest!
 Fare thee weel, thou best and dearest!
 Thine be ilka joy and treasure,
 20 Peace, enjoyment, love, and pleasure!
 Æ fond kiss, and then we sever;
 Æ fareweel, alas, for ever!
 Deep in heart-wrung tears I'll pledge thee,
 Warring sighs and groans I'll wage¹ thee!

25 Scott has remarked that the four lines beginning with
 "Had we never lov'd sae kindly" are worth a thousand
romances; and Mrs. Jameson has said that not only are
they worth a thousand romances — they are "in them-

¹ pledge.

selves a complete romance. They are the alpha and omega of feeling, and contain the essence of an existence of pain and pleasure distilled into one burning drop."

In August, 1792, Mr. Baillie and his two daughters, neighbors of Mrs. Dunlop, while on their way to England 5 called on Burns. The meeting with Miss Leslie Baillie filled the poet's soul with "delighting" and "pure" emotions, as he wrote Mrs. Dunlop. He accompanied his guests some fifteen miles, and as he rode home he thought of the old ballad beginning 10

"O bonie Lizzie Baillie,
I'll rowe thee in my plaidie,"

and composed

BONIE LESLEY.

O SAW ye bonie Lesley
As she gaed o'er the border? 15
She's gane, like Alexander,
To spread her conquests farther.

To see her is to love her,
And love but her for ever;
For Nature made her what she is, 20
And never made anither!

Thou art a queen, fair Lesley,
Thy subjects, we before thee:
Thou art divine, fair Lesley,
The hearts o' men adore thee. 25

The Deil he could na scaith¹ thee,
Or aught that wad belang thee;

¹ harm.

He 'd look into thy bonie face,
And say, "I canna wrang thee."

The powers aboon will tent thee ;
Misfortune sha' na steer¹ thee ;
5 Thou 'rt like themselves sae lovely,
That ill they'll ne'er let near thee.

Return again, fair Lesley,
Return to Caledonie !
That we may brag, we hae a lass
10 There 's nane again sae bonie.

Three years before he had written *To Mary in Heaven*.
It is the same Mary that he remembers so tenderly in

HIGHLAND MARY.

YE banks, and braes, and streams around
The castle o' Montgomery,
15 Green be your woods and fair your flowers,
Your waters never drumlie !²
There simmer³ first unfauld her robes,
And there the langest tarry ;
For there I took the last fareweel
20 O' my sweet Highland Mary.

How sweetly bloom'd the gay green birk,
How rich the hawthorn's blossom,
As underneath their fragrant shade
I clasp'd her to my bosom !
25 The golden hours, on angel wings,
Flew o'er me and my dearie ;

¹ molest.

² muddy.

³ summer.

For dear to me as light and life,
Was my sweet Highland Mary.

Wi' monie a vow and lock'd embrace
Our parting was fu' tender;
And, pledging aft to meet again, 5
We tore oursels asunder;
But O! fell death's untimely frost,
That nipt my flower sae early!
Now green's the sod, and cauld's the clay,
That wraps my Highland Mary! 10

O pale, pale now, those rosy lips,
I aft hae kiss'd sae fondly!
And closed for aye the sparkling glance,
That dwelt on me sae kindly!
And mould'ring now in silent dust, 15
That heart that lo'ed me dearly!
But still within my bosom's core
Shall live my Highland Mary.

In the fall of this year, 1792, he began to send contributions to *Melodies of Scotland*. He writes the editor, 20 Thomson: "I have hitherto deferred the sublimer, more pathetic airs, until more leisure, as they will take and deserve a greater effort." And a week later he writes of *Highland Mary*: "I think it in my happiest manner: you will see at first glance that it suits the air," — Katherine 25 Ogie, one of the oldest and most plaintive of Scottish melodies.

These verses illustrate Milton's declaration that rhyme is "no necessary adjunct or true ornament of poem or good verse."

Another contribution to Thomson's collection was

DUNCAN GRAY.

DUNCAN GRAY came here to woo,
 Ha, ha, the wooin o't !
 On blythe Yule night when we were fou,
 Ha, ha, the wooin o't !
 5 Maggie coost her head fu hiegh,
 Look'd asklent¹ and unco skiegh,²
 Gart³ poor Duncan stand abiegh ;⁴
 Ha, ha, the wooin o't !

Duncan fleech'd,⁵ and Duncan pray'd ;
 10 Ha, ha, the wooin o't !
 Meg was deaf as Ailsa Craig,⁶
 Ha, ha, the wooin o't !
 Duncan sigh'd baith out and in,
 Grat⁷ his een⁸ baith bleer't⁹ and blin',
 15 Spak o' lowpin owre a linn ;¹⁰
 Ha, ha, the wooin o't !

Time and chance are but a tide,
 Ha, ha, the wooin o't !
 Slighted love is sair to bide,
 20 Ha, ha, the wooin o't !
 "Shall I, like a fool," quoth he,
 "For a haughty hizzie¹¹ die ?
 She may gae to — France for me !"
 Ha, ha, the wooin o't !

¹ askance. ² very high-spirited. ³ made. ⁴ aloof. ⁵ flattered. ⁶ a rocky islet in the Firth of Clyde, near the Ayrshire coast. ⁷ wept. ⁸ eyes. ⁹ bleared. ¹⁰ I.e., using drowning as a means of suicide. A linn is a waterfall. "A line . . . that should make you immortal," wrote Hon. Andrew Erskine to the poet. ¹¹ lass.

How it comes let doctors tell,
 Ha, ha, the wooin o't!
 Meg grew sick as he grew hale,
 Ha, ha, the wooin o't!
 Something in her bosom wrings, 5
 For relief a sigh she brings;
 And O! her een, they spak sic things!
 Ha, ha, the wooin o't!

Duncan was a lad o' grace,
 Ha, ha, the wooin o't! 10
 Maggie's was a piteous case,
 Ha, ha, the wooin o't!
 Duncan could na be her death,
 Swelling pity smoor'd¹ his wrath;
 Now they're crouse and cantie² baith; 15
 Ha, ha, the wooin o't!

In sending this song to the editor, Burns writes: "Duncan Gray' is that kind of light-horse gallop of an air which precludes sentiment. The ludicrous is its ruling feature." Mr. Douglas says: "Few of Burns's songs acquired a 20 more rapid popularity than this; it is so thoroughly pointed and natural throughout."

In 1791 Burns had given up his farm and bought a house in Dumfries, where he lived as exciseman. At this time his democratic sympathies were touched by the 25 French Revolution. In 1793 some recent success of the "patriots," together with the recollection of Scotland's struggle for freedom in 1314, when Bruce on the field of Bannockburn gained the victory over Edward II which decided the independence of Scotland, roused Burns to 30 write

¹ smothered. ² lively and happy.

SCOTS WHA HAE.

SCOTS, wha hae wi' Wallace bled,
Scots, wham Bruce has aften led;
Welcome to your gory bed,
Or to victory!

5 Now 's the day, and now 's the hour;
See the front o' battle lour;
See approach proud Edward's power -
Chains and slavery!

10 Wha will be a traitor knave?
Wha can fill a coward's grave?
Wha sae base as be a slave?
Let him turn and flee!
Wha for Scotland's king and law
Freedom's sword will strongly draw,
15 Freeman stand, or Freeman fa',
Let him follow me!

By oppression's woes and pains!
By your sons in servile chains!
We will drain our dearest veins,
20 But they shall be free!
Lay the proud usurpers low!
Tyrants fall in every foe!
Liberty's in every blow! —
Let us do, or die!

25 In sending Thomson this "Scot's Ode," which one might suppose to be Bruce's "address to his heroic followers on that eventful morning," Burns added: "So may God ever defend the cause of Truth and Liberty, as *He did that day!*"

"Independently of my enthusiasm as a Scotsman," he wrote Lord Buchan, in 1794, "I have rarely met with anything in history which interests my feelings as a man, equal with the story of Bannockburn. On the one hand, a cruel, but able usurper, leading on the finest army in Europe, to extinguish the last spark of freedom among a greatly-daring and greatly-injured people; on the other hand, the desperate relics of a gallant nation devoting themselves to rescue their bleeding country or perish with her. Liberty! thou art a prize truly and indeed invaluable, for never canst thou be too dearly bought!"

As an improvement upon a street ditty Burns wrote

A RED, RED ROSE.

My Luve is like a red, red rose,
That's newly sprung in June:
My Luve is like the melodie,
That's sweetly play'd in tune. 15

As fair art thou, my bonie lass,
So deep in luve am I:
And I will luve thee still, my Dear,
Till a' the seas gang dry. 20

Till a' the seas gang dry, my Dear,
And the rocks melt wi' the sun;
And I will luve thee still, my Dear,
While the sands o' life shall run.

And fare-thee-well, my only Luve! 25
And fare-thee-well awhile!
And I will come again, my Luve,
Tho' 't were ten thousand mile!

It is worth while to remember Hazlitt's comment on this simple lyric, quoted above in connection with *Mary Morison*.

In 1795, when it was safer for a reformer to speak out than it had been since 1792, Burns wrote Thomson : " A great critic, Aikin, on songs says that Love and Wine are the exclusive themes for song-writing. The following is on neither subject and consequently is no Song ; but will be allowed, I think, to be two or three pretty good 10 *prose* thoughts inverted into rhyme " :

A MAN'S A MAN FOR A' THAT.

Is there, for honest poverty,
 That hings his head, an' a' that ?
 The coward slave, we pass him by,
 We dare be poor for a' that !
 15 For a' that, an' a' that,
 Our toils obscure, an' a' that ;
 The rank is but the guinea's stamp ;
 The man's the gowd¹ for a' that.

What tho' on hamely fare we dine,
 20 Wear hodden-gray,² an' a' that ;
 Gie fools their silks, and knaves their wine,
 A man's a man for a' that.
 For a' that, an' a' that,
 Their tinsel show, an' a' that ;
 25 The honest man, tho' e'er sae poor,
 Is king o' men for a' that.

Ye see yon birkie,³ ca'd a lord,
 Wha struts, an' stares, an' a' that ;

¹ gold.

² coarse woolen cloth.

³ fellow.

Tho' hundreds worship at his word,
 He's but a coof¹ for a' that :
 For a' that, an' a' that,
 His riband, star, an' a' that,
 The man o' independent mind, 5
 He looks and laughs at a' that.

A prince can mak a belted knight,
 A marquis, duke, an' a' that;
 But an honest man's aboon his might,
 Guid faith he mauna fa'² that ! 10
 For a' that, an' a' that,
 Their dignities, an' a' that,
 The pith o' sense, an' pride o' worth,
 Are higher rank than a' that.

Then let us pray that come it may, 15
 As come it will for a' that,
 That sense and worth, o'er a' the earth,
 May bear the gree,³ an' a' that.
 For a' that, an' a' that,
 It's coming yet, for a' that, 20
 That man to man, the warld o'er,
 Shall brothers be for a' that.

"I do not give you the foregoing song for your book,
 . . . for the piece is not really poetry."

Mr. Logie Robertson says : "If it be not poetry — and 25
 Matthew Arnold of all critics alone agrees with the
 author — it is something better." Whatever we call the
 lyric, many a British heart responded to the sentiments,
 and the spirit of it is worth considering in connection
 with the American Revolution as well as with that of the 30

¹ fool. ² must not claim. ³ prize.

French. "It is so characteristic of Burns," says Douglas, "that of all the poems and songs he ever wrote, it could be least spared from a collection of his works." What other song so effectively sings Liberty, Equality, 5 Fraternity? It is good sense, good politics, good religion.

The next year was the poet's last. During his fatal illness he was attended by a kind-hearted friend of Mrs. Burns. One morning he suggested to this young woman 10 that if she would like new verses to any favorite tune, he would do his best to produce some. She at once played a melody she liked until Burns became familiar with it, and a few minutes later he handed her these verses :

O, WERT THOU IN THE CAULD BLAST.

O, WERT thou in the cauld blast,
 15 On yonder lea, on yonder lea,
 My plaidie to the angry airt,¹
 I 'd shelter thee, I 'd shelter thee.
 Or did misfortune's bitter storms
 Around thee blaw, around thee blaw,
 20 Thy beild² should be my bosom,
 To share it a', to share it a'.

Or were I in the wildest waste,
 Sae black and bare, sae black and bare,
 The desert were a paradise,
 25 If thou wert there, if thou wert there.
 Or were I monarch o' the globe,
 Wi' thee to reign, wi' thee to reign,
 The brightest jewel in my crown
 Wad be my queen, wad be my queen.

¹ quarter.

² shelter.

In this simple song the youthfulness of *Mary Morison* has developed into an expression of love that is mature and thoroughly refined. Much of the best poetry is incomplete until it is read aloud, but perhaps Mendelssohn has done more toward perfecting these two stanzas 5 than the human voice can do, his melody harmonizes so exquisitely with the beautiful thought. It is with reverence that we listen as through the weird Scots atmosphere both the musician and the poet bring us the appealing message of one whose sympathy was enriched by 10 suffering.

because, above all things, he must see the world. As to seeing the world, we apprehend this will cause him little difficulty, if he have but eyesight to see it with. Without eyesight, indeed, the task might be hard. The blind or
5 the purblind man 'travels from Dan to Beersheba, and finds it all barren.' But happily every poet is born *in* the world; and sees it, with or against his will, every day and every hour he lives. The mysterious workmanship of man's heart, the true light and the inscrutable darkness
10 of man's destiny, reveal themselves not only in capital cities and crowded saloons, but in every hut and hamlet where men have their abode. Nay, do not the elements of all human virtues and all human vices; the passions at once of a Borgia and of a Luther, lie written, in
15 stronger or fainter lines, in the consciousness of every individual bosom, that has practised honest self-examination? Truly, this same world may be seen in Mossgiel and Tarbolton, if we look well, as clearly as it ever came to light in Crockford's or the Tuileries itself.

20 But sometimes still harder requisitions are laid on the poor aspirant to poetry; for it is hinted that he should have *been born* two centuries ago; inasmuch as poetry, about that date, vanished from the earth, and became no longer attainable by men! Such cobweb speculations
25 have, now and then, overhung the field of literature; but they obstruct not the growth of any plant there: the Shakspeare or the Burns, unconsciously and merely as he walks onward, silently brushes them away. Is not every genius an impossibility till he appear? Why do we call
30 him new and original, if *we* saw where his marble was lying, and what fabric he could rear from it? It is not the material but the workman that is wanting. It is not *the dark place* that hinders, but the dim *eye*. A Scottish *peasant's life* was the meanest and rudest of all lives, till

PRONUNCIATION.

[Mr. E. Charlton Black, of Cambridge, not only gave me valuable suggestions on this subject, but was thoughtful enough to read the manuscript to Dr. John Watson (Ian Maclaren).]

AFTER reminding us that the Scottish language is not a different language from English, but merely the northern dialect of English, Mr. John Stuart Blackie says: "The Scotch form of English bears on its face the distinct evidence of a dialect formed under the influence of music and popular minstrelsy. It is, philologically considered, the musical and lyrical variety of the general English speech, and as such has a claim to be recognized in the higher education of all who speak the common English tongue." Instead of giving it this recognition, however, we are likely to say with Robert Louis Stevenson that before long Burns's Ayrshire and Scott's "brave metropolitan utterance" will be "the ghosts of speech." Meantime let us not be timid about pronouncing this dying Scots-English. Inasmuch as every county has its peculiarities, hard and fast rules are out of place.

A has nearly the same variety of sounds that we have in the English *ale, care, arm, ask*, and *all*; *a'* is equivalent to *a* in *all*. *AI*, as in *mair*, is one way of indicating the sound of *a* in *care*. *E* is both short and long, much as in English. *I* generally has the sound of *i* in *bird* (sometimes it is like *i* in *pin*, or *u* in *cup*, occasionally like *i* in *fine*); *Y* has nearly

the same values. *O* has only one sound, as in *more*; whether long, as in *morn*, or short, as in *bonie*, the quality is practically the same. *U*, when not like *u* in *run*, or *oo* as in *moon*, is as much like the French *u* or German *ü* as it is like any one sound. *UI* and *OO*, as in *guid* and *aboon*, are but slight modifications of this sound. *OU* is like the English *oo*. *H*, when not silent, is strongly aspirate; *r* rolls — sometimes into two syllables; *ng* is simple, as in *lang-er* (not like the English *anger*); and *ch* and *gh* are strongly aspirated as gutturals, like the German *ch* after *a*, *o*, *u*, and *au*. E.g., *brought* is pronounced *brocht*. Final *ed* has the sound *et* or *it* and is sometimes so spelled. *-Ing* is pronounced like its ancient form *-and*, in which the *d* is silent.

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ESSAY ON BURNS



OUTLINE OF THE LIFE OF BURNS.

IN the southwest corner of Scotland, on the coast, some thirty miles from Glasgow, is the little town of Ayr. It was in a two-roomed cottage near by that Robert Burns was born. He inherited from his strict, sturdy father a proud, quick temper; from his mother the love of song. Besides his birthplace, Burns had three other homes in Ayrshire,—Mount Oliphant, Lochlea, and Mossgiel.

Robert was a lad of seven when his father undertook to earn a living on the small upland farm of Mount Oliphant. He worked like a slave to do his part, as oldest boy, towards supporting the family. His regular attendance at school ended in his ninth year. After that he spent a few weeks at a time in several schools for some special purpose, but his principal teacher was his father. The one luxury that this wise father allowed himself was a library. Many books that he could not buy he would borrow; and in the gloom that enshrouds this life of incessant toil, which impaired permanently the physical and mental powers of the poet, there is certainly one bright spot. Although the Burns boys rarely saw anybody but their own family, they had in their father a companion who made it his business to educate his children. The fact must not be overlooked that Robert read, besides many other authors, Addison, Pope, Richardson, Smollett, Milton, and Shakspeare. He was an eager and industrious reader. He absorbed much of the Bible, and of *A Select Collection of English Songs*, his *vade mecum*.

he writes : " I pored over them driving my cart, or walking to labor, song by song, verse by verse — carefully noting the tender or sublime from affectation and fustian."

Into this monotonous life of drudgery and economy, brightened by the interesting reading and the profitable conversation that the worthy Scotsman so persistently introduced, came a new element; when in his fifteenth year Robert fell in love with the girl who was his partner in harvesting, and wrote " Handsome Nell," his first song. Later he wrote in his Commonplace Book, " I never had the least thought . . . of turning Poet till I got once heartily in Love, and then Rhyme and Song were, in a manner, the spontaneous language of my heart." Henceforth, as he himself said, this bit of tinder was " eternally lighted up by some Goddess or other."

After twelve years of patient toil in Mount Oliphant, the Burns family removed to Lochlea, in the parish of Tarbolton. Here they lived in a similar way, but more comfortably, during the following seven years. Robert made several variations in the routine of life. For a time he studied mensuration and surveying at Kirkoswald, a village full of smugglers and adventurers. Soon afterward he entered heartily into the founding and supporting of a debating society, the Bachelors' Club. According to his brother, he was in the secret of half the love affairs of the parish of Tarbolton, and was never without at least one of his own.

In his twenty-third year he tried, but in vain, to win the affections of a certain farmer's daughter. Much depressed, he then went to Irvine to learn flax-dressing. " In Irvine," writes his brother Gilbert, " he contracted some acquaintance of a freer manner of thinking and living than he had been used to, whose society prepared him for overleaping the bounds of rigid virtue which had hitherto restrained him. During this period, also, he became a Freemason, which was

his first introduction to the life of a boon companion." But his melancholy grew on him, and his business venture proved a failure ; he returned to Lochlea, worked as hard as ever on the farm, and, if we may believe Gilbert, was frugal and temperate. He found time to be social and to write poems and songs.

His father had lived to see something of the poet's skill, but he died soon afterward, anxious lest the young man should prove lacking in will power.

Robert and Gilbert now leased the small farm of Mossgiel, near the village of Mauchline. In spite of the older son's determination and persistent efforts, the crops were a failure for two successive seasons, and the farmer lost heart. Yet, unfortunate as he was in his farming, indiscriminating and imprudent as he was in his wooing, he was so generous socially, and so frank to confess his follies that he had many friends among the worthy people of Ayrshire. The generous-hearted, upright Gavin Hamilton and the affectionate, cultured Robert Aiken encouraged, in many ways, the young poet who was industriously composing in the field and writing out at a deal table in the humble farmhouse a notable collection of verse. At Hamilton's suggestion, he published his first volume of poetry. There was no doubt that the author of this volume, although only twenty-six years old, was a genius.

This important event was quickly followed by another. The natural way for him to gain the attention of Scotland was by making himself known at Scotland's capital ; so he went to Edinburgh. The reputation of the poet attracted the attention of the curious. The charm of the conversationalist held spellbound citizens of the highest rank. The pride and assurance of the Ayrshire plowman lent to his modesty and winsomeness a freedom and vigor that proved irresistibly fascinating. Naturally enough, in answer to the

adopted in print since then, we rather believe that good men deal sparingly in hatred, either wise or unwise : nay that a 'good hater' is still a desideratum in this world. The Devil, at least, who passes for the chief and best of 5 that class, is said to be nowise an amiable character.

Of the verses which Indignation makes, Burns has also given us specimens : and among the best that were ever given. Who will forget his '*Dweller in yon Dungeon dark*;' a piece that might have been chanted by the 10 Furies of Æschylus? The secrets of the infernal Pit are laid bare ; a boundless baleful 'darkness visible ;' and streaks of hell-fire quivering madly in its black haggard bosom !

15 Dweller in yon Dungeon dark,
 Hangman of Creation, mark !
 Who in widow's weeds appears,
 Laden with unhonoured years,
 Noosing with care a bursting purse,
 Baited with many a deadly curse !

20 Why should we speak of *Scots wha hae wi' Wallace bled* ; since all know of it, from the king to the meanest of his subjects? This dithyrambic was composed on horse-back ; in riding in the middle of tempests, over the wildest Galloway moor, in company with a Mr. Syme, 25 who, observing the poet's looks, forbore to speak,—judiciously enough, for a man composing *Bruce's Address* might be unsafe to trifle with. Doubtless this stern hymn was singing itself, as he formed it, through the soul of Burns : but to the external ear, it should be sung 30 with the throat of the whirlwind. So long as there is warm blood in the heart of Scotchman or man, it will *move in fierce thrills* under this war-ode ; the best, we *believe, that was ever written by any pen.*

But his duties did not always keep the real man in the background. A diligent officer, severe with regular smugglers, he was merciful Robert Burns when he dealt with country brewers and retailers. He also took delight in working for the permanent good of his fellow-men. Long before there was any national movement in this direction, he set on foot a plan for the intellectual improvement of the community by taking an active part in establishing a public library. And while trying to do the work of two or three men, one day seizing a cargo of tobacco from an unlucky smuggler, the next punishing some poor wretch for selling liquor without a license, the same evening writing a beautiful poem, he did not lose sight of his high ideal of the mission of a poet. As in his Mossgiel days, he still "rhymed for fun"; he often wrote as a favor to a friend, but he could not bear the thought of writing for money.

During this period of hard work he had been buoyed up by the hope of promotion, but he found he must for the present give up the longed-for supervisorship and content himself with being an ordinary exciseman in Dumfries. Upon receiving the appointment, with a salary of seventy pounds, he gave up the farm, which had proved a losing investment, and in 1791 took a house of three rooms in this little town.

It was a time of revolution; a time when quiet, pensive poets were stirred to their hearts' core. The excitement of the patriotic Burns, keenly sensitive to the welfare of Scotland, and especially of her peasants, at times knew no bounds. His sympathy for those who were trying to secure their rights through the French Revolution led to vigorous expressions of his ideas of liberty. Yet he was a government official. Loyal as he was, he was accused of disloyalty, and came very near losing his position. The tongue-tied poet felt keenly that the world was going wrong and that he

was in no position to help right it. But the storm blew over; Burns afterwards took an active part in fighting for a Liberal in an election contest, and those friends who had carefully prevented the printing of many of his productions allowed the publication of several ballads that once would have been condemned.

There were intervals during this period in which he did almost no literary work. Much of his time was spent in helping Johnson make his collection of songs for his *Scots Musical Museum* and in contributing to Thomson's more ambitious and better edited work, the *Melodies of Scotland*. Meanwhile he was growing more melancholy. After settling in Dumfries the family lived in comparative comfort, yet toward the end of his life they were reduced to narrow straits. Outside of his home he had to encounter the contempt of the Dumfries aristocracy, but he recovered from their abuse and refused to part with his good humor. In his gloom he sought relief in "the merry song and the flowing bowl." At times he got real help and comfort and hope from religion. It was under such circumstances that he kept on writing songs.

Scotland had waited for her poet till the latter half of the eighteenth century — a long time. Even then he was destined to lead a life of incessant toil as a farmer and gauger, while his real work had to be done incidentally. His friends, recognizing his genius, had introduced him to Edinburgh, and so to Scotland; he was becoming widely known, and was doing some of his best work, when, at the age of thirty-seven, he suddenly died.

OUTLINE OF THE LIFE OF CARLYLE.

Thomas Carlyle, born in 1795, seven months before Burns died, was the son of a frugal, undemonstrative father, a stone mason, and a worthy, intelligent mother. At their home in Ecclefechan his mother taught him to read, his father to count. In his seventh year the report came from the village school that he was "complete" in English. In 1809, after three years at a "doleful and hateful Academy," he began his five years' hermit course at Edinburgh University. He studied for the ministry, as his father wished, but could not conscientiously make that his life work. He says of this miserable period, "I was without friends, experience, or connection in the sphere of human business, was of sly humor, proud enough and to spare, and had begun my long curriculum of dyspepsia which has never ended since." The question was, what should he do for a living? The very difficulties in the way spurred him on to become a lawyer. To study law he needed money. To earn the money he taught school. But he could not tolerate the schoolmaster's drudgery, and gave up teaching; meanwhile he had studied law long enough to abandon it gladly on the ground that its miseries would lead to no reward but money.

At this point in his career Carlyle received substantial help from others. He owed much to a college friend, Edward Irving, who introduced him to Miss Jane Welsh.

the witty, fascinating daughter of a country surgeon. The next year Irving helped him to some tutoring in London. He soon gave that up for literary work. Dyspepsia and "the noises" drove him from the metropolis to a little farm at Hoddam Hill. There he spent a quiet year making translations from the German. Forty years later he referred to it as "perhaps the most triumphantly important" of his life. "He was building up his character," says Mr. John Nichol, "and forming the opinions which, with few material changes, he long continued to hold." He found his skepticisms and his agonizing doubtings giving way to quiet, spontaneous communings with Nature.

After many wearisome attempts to obtain recognition he saw that his life work was to be literature. In 1826, at the age of thirty-one, he married Miss Welsh. They began housekeeping in a cottage at Comely Bank, Edinburgh. Mrs. Carlyle was so charming a hostess that she attracted to their home more than one literary friend. Among the most devoted was Jeffrey, the editor of the *Edinburgh Review*. Before the end of another year, Carlyle had made the beginning of a literary reputation. For no sympathy was the young, struggling writer more grateful than for the genuine admiration shown by Goethe, foremost genius of the age, who recognized him as "a moral force of great importance."

But so far he had made only a beginning. He received so little for his writings that, for the sake of economy and quiet, he retired to Craigenputtock. Here it was, fifteen miles from Dumfries, five from the nearest neighbor, in a farmhouse amidst the dreary moorland, that Carlyle wrote the *Essay on Burns*. It appeared in the *Edinburgh Review* in December, 1828. During his six years of Craigenputtock life, the monotony of which was relieved by Emerson's memorable visit and several months spent in London and

Edinburgh, he wrote most of his biographical and critical essays and *Sartor Resartus*.

His youth had been spent amid bleak surroundings under the care of parents whom he revered and loved. Then came the struggle to know himself and to determine his position in the universe. All this prepared the way for his life in London.

He went to London in 1834 with little fame, less money, and few friends. He had written the *French Revolution* and *Hero-Worship*, and had resorted to the ugly expedient of lecturing, before the tardy recognition of the value of his work insured him a living. He still worked industriously, producing literature that gave abundant evidence of his independence in politics and religion. Then came the death of his mother, who, and who only, says Froude, "had stood between him and the loneliness of which he had so often and so passionately complained."

He withdrew from the world more than ever for the "desperate dead-lift pull" with his great *History of Friedrich II*. The result of his painful struggles was a triumph recognized in Scotland, England, and Germany. His own countrymen eagerly elected him Lord Rector of Edinburgh. His unique address to the students excited unbounded enthusiasm. It was the proudest, most joyous day of his life. But in the midst of his triumph his wife died. Stunned by her sudden death, he realized for the first time what she had been to him. He entered without warning the saddest period of his life. His fame was secure, but it had come too late. He cared little for it now that he could not share it with her. Success and failure were empty sounds. Yet the last years have an interest of their own. He had always been benevolent, eager to help the working classes; and as his own affliction increased he became still more eager to aid those in distress. Not was

he himself neglected. Painters, sculptors, literary men, and disciples were bent on preserving the fame of the venerable Chelsea Prophet. Best of all, firm friends stood by him in his need and comforted him. Clearly, he did not find age a "crown of thorns"; yet he was haunted by

"To-morrow and to-morrow and to-morrow."

He died in February, 1881, at the age of eighty-five. In accordance with his own wish, he was buried in Ecclefechan with his kindred, rather than in Westminster Abbey.

BURNS AND CARLYLE.

WE naturally ask why Carlyle should write an account of Burns. He was preëminently the man to do it. The two men had much in common. In the first place, they were Scotchmen ; more than that, they were Lowlanders. Of peasant birth, they began life in insignificant hamlets, and were brought up under similar home influences. Both had fathers notable for their integrity and independence. Neither was much indebted to the schools for his early education, but both were helped and encouraged by far-seeing, ambitious parents. The lads enjoyed books and read eagerly and widely. So much for their boyhood.

Each had to fight for a place in the world. Carlyle struggled for several years to secure a meager competence. With all his hard work, Burns barely made a living. The following statement about Carlyle applies quite as well to Burns : He rose — “ not by birth or favor, not on the ladder of any established profession, but only by the internal force that was in him — to the highest place as a modern man of letters.”

Both were entertained at the Scottish capital, and both stood the test. Burns was not spoiled ; Carlyle was bored. In his *Reminiscences*, the dyspeptic writes of the “ effulgences of ‘ Edinburgh society,’ big dinners, parties,” that it all passed away as “ an obliging pageant merely.” In spite of it, Burns retained his sincerity, his “ indisputable air of Truth” ; in spite of it, too, Carlyle remained thoroughly genuine.

Toward mankind their attitudes were very different, but neither hesitated to say just what he thought of persons he did not like ; neither wasted any sympathy on the upper classes ; both urged them to remember that those under them were human and were to be treated as men. Yet neither derived entire satisfaction from his relations with his fellows. Both were often heavy-hearted. The melancholy of the one is as genuine as the melancholy of the other. Burns had the happy faculty of turning his into gayety, but Carlyle, with all his humor, could get only partial relief.

Both are said to have been lovable men. We know Burns must have been particularly lovable, and we may be interested in the testimony of an Aberdonian, who said, " I knew Carlyle, and I aver to you that his heart was as large and generous as his brain was powerful ; that he was essentially a most lovable man, and that there were depths of tenderness, kindliness, benevolence, and most delicate courtesy in him, with all his seeming ruggedness and sternness, such as I have found throughout my life rarely in any human being." Mr. Froude says that when we know him fully, we shall not love or admire him the less "because he had infirmities like the rest of us."

We recognize Burns as a natural poet. "The intensity of Carlyle's vision," says Mr. John Nichol, "was that of a born artist." He adds, "None of our poets, from Chaucer and Dunbar to Burns and Tennyson, have been more alive to the influences of external nature."

As men of genius, they have been grouped, not with the Miltons and the Shaksperes, but with those who are like "the wind-harp which answers to the breath that touches it, now low and sweet, now rising into wild swell or angry scream, as the strings are swept by some passing gust."

Burns was a prophet-poet. He saw and thought and *spoke for the world*. In the vigorous Scotch way, he "spoke

out." Carlyle was a prophet. "The mission of the Hebrew prophet," says Mr. Macpherson, "was by passionate utterance to keep alive in the minds of his countrymen a deep, abiding sense of life's mystery, sacredness, and solemnity. What Isaiah did for his day Carlyle did for the moderns."

Such was the man, then, who helps us interpret Scotland's darling poet. Carlyle speaks for Scotland. His is the tender voice of the fond mother, who, though confident that her son,

"Who lives immortal in the hearts of men,"

will never die, yet loves to tell us, her eyes now tearful, now glowing with a mother's pride, about her boy. All this so simply, so naturally, so heartily, with a pathos like Burns's own that softens beautifully the stern, rugged Carlyle.

It would be difficult to find two great men about whom there has been more difference of opinion. Carlyle has been called "about the most cantankerous Scotchman that ever maltreated the English tongue." Mr. Richard Garnett, on the other hand, says that Carlyle's supremacy as a literary genius is attested by the fact that he is one of the very few in whose hands language is wholly flexible and fusible, and adds, "Great and deathless writer as he was, he will be honored by posterity for his influence on human life rather than for his supremacy as a literary artist." As to this influence on human life, the dying witness of John Sterling was: "Towards England no man has been and done like you." And Froude once wrote: "Leaving out Goethe, Carlyle was indisputably the greatest man (if you measure greatness by the permanent effect he has and will produce on the minds

tic subjects, could not but operate from afar ; and certainly in no heart did the love of country ever burn with a warmer glow than in that of Burns: 'a tide of Scottish prejudice,' as he modestly calls this deep and generous
 5 feeling, 'had been poured along his veins ; and he felt that it would boil there till the flood-gates shut in eternal rest.' It seemed to him, as if *he* could do so little for his country, and yet would so gladly have done all. One small province stood open for him, — that of Scot-
 10 tish Song ; and how eagerly he entered on it, how devotedly he laboured there ! In his toilsome journeyings, this object never quits him ; it is the little happy-valley of his careworn heart. In the gloom of his own affliction, he eagerly searches after some lonely brother of the
 15 muse, and rejoices to snatch one other name from the oblivion that was covering it ! These were early feelings, and they abode with him to the end :

 . . . A wish (I mind its power),
 A wish, that to my latest hour
 20 Will strongly heave my breast, —
 That I, for poor auld Scotland's sake,
 Some useful plan or book could make,
 Or sing a sang at least.

 The rough bur Thistle spreading wide
 25 Amang the bearded bear,
 I turn'd my weeding-clips aside,
 And spared the symbol dear.

But to leave the mere literary character of Burns, which has already detained us too long. Far more inter-
 30 esting than any of his written works, as it appears to us, are his acted ones : the Life he willed and was fated to lead among his fellow-men. These Poems are but like *little rhymed fragments* scattered here and there in the

How naturally and fully these characteristics blend in Burns, — humor, wit, good sense, satire, independence, sympathy, — above all, sympathy!

He was a man who knew men and how to appeal to men. When he spoke to his neighbors, he spoke with a voice that men everywhere understood. He has been called provincial; he was also national and universal. And I care not how many are our expressions of admiration for his love of nature, his descriptions of scenery, his graphic power, his terse, lucid, forcible, often elegant style; back of the great artist we must see the sincere man in his own simple way dealing directly with human life.

His earlier work consisted largely of satires, descriptions of country life, and epistles. Afterward he drifted more and more into song-writing. It may be worth while to consider the question whether the miscellaneous poems show more clearly the greatness of the poet; but long after we have forgotten most of them, I fancy, we shall be singing the songs. Exactly why it may be hard to tell. He expresses beautifully what we know to be true. He sings tunefully what we have often felt. Other poets have done this for us; but there is something subtle about Burns's way of doing it. We sometimes feel that others have made an effort to speak for us and to please us. Somehow we get the impression that Burns's writing was as unstudied, as natural, as spontaneous as his breathing. Many of the songs seem to have written themselves, and we find ourselves singing them as if they were our own. Other poets we like and admire; to some extent we may make them ours — Burns in his own winning way charms us; before we know it, we are his.

sole glory, and to follow it as the one thing needful, through poverty or riches, through good or evil report. Another far meaner ambition still cleaves to him; he must dream and struggle about a certain 'Rock of Independence;' which, natural and even admirable as it might be, was still but a warring with the world, on the comparatively insignificant ground of his being more completely or less completely supplied with money than others; of his standing at a higher or at a lower altitude in general estimation than others. For the world still appears to him, as to the young, in borrowed colours: he expects from it what it cannot give to any man; seeks for contentment, not within himself, in action and wise effort, but from without, in the kindness of circumstances, in love, friendship, honour, pecuniary ease. He would be happy, not actively and in himself, but passively and from some ideal cornucopia of Enjoyments, not earned by his own labour, but showered on him by the beneficence of Destiny. Thus, like a young man, he cannot gird himself up for any worthy well-calculated goal, but swerves to and fro, between passionate hope and remorseful disappointment: rushing onwards with a deep tempestuous force, he surmounts or breaks asunder many a barrier; travels, nay advances far, but advancing only under uncertain guidance, is ever and anon turned from his path; and to the last cannot reach the only true happiness of a man, that of clear decided Activity in the sphere for which, by nature and circumstances, he has been fitted and appointed.

30 We do not say these things in dispraise of Burns; nay, perhaps, they but interest us the more in his favour. This blessing is not given soonest to the best; but rather, it is often the greatest minds that are latest in obtaining *it*; for where most is to be developed, most time may be

required to develop it. A complex condition had been assigned him from without ; as complex a condition from within : no 'preëstablished harmony' existed between the clay soil of Mossgiel and the empyrean soul of Robert Burns ; it was not wonderful that the adjustment between them should have been long postponed, and his arm long cumbered, and his sight confused, in so vast and discordant an economy as he had been appointed steward over. Byron was, at his death, but a year younger than Burns ; and through life, as it might have appeared, far more simply situated : yet in him too we can trace no such adjustment, no such moral manhood ; but at best, and only a little before his end, the beginning of what seemed such.

By much the most striking incident in Burns's Life is his journey to Edinburgh ; but perhaps a still more important one is his residence at Irvine, so early as in his twenty-third year. Hitherto his life had been poor and toilworn ; but otherwise not ungenial, and, with all its distresses, by no means unhappy. In his parentage, deducting outward circumstances, he had every reason to reckon himself fortunate. His father was a man of thoughtful, intense, earnest character, as the best of our peasants are ; valuing knowledge, possessing some, and what is far better and rarer, openminded for more : a man with a keen insight and devout heart ; reverent towards God, friendly therefore at once, and fearless towards all that God has made : in one word, though but a hard-handed peasant, a complete and fully unfolded *Man*. Such a father is seldom found in any rank in society ; and was worth descending far in society to seek. Unfortunately, he was very poor ; had he been even a little richer, almost never so little, the whole might have issued far otherwise. Mighty events

turn on a straw; the crossing of a brook decides the conquest of the world. Had this William Burns's small seven acres of nursery-ground anywise prospered, the boy Robert had been sent to school; had struggled forward, 5 as so many weaker men do, to some university; come forth not as a rustic wonder, but as a regular well-trained intellectual workman, and changed the whole course of British Literature, — for it lay in him to have done this! But the nursery did not prosper; poverty sank his 10 whole family below the help of even our cheap school-system: Burns remained a hard-worked ploughboy, and British literature took its own course. Nevertheless, even in this rugged scene there is much to nourish him. If he drudges, it is with his brother, and for his father 15 and mother, whom he loves, and would fain shield from want. Wisdom is not banished from their poor hearth, nor the balm of natural feeling: the solemn words, *Let us worship God*, are heard there from a 'priest-like father'; if threatenings or unjust men throw mother and 20 children into tears, these are tears not of grief only, but of holiest affection; every heart in that humble group feels itself the closer knit to every other; in their hard warfare they are there together, a 'little band of brethren.' Neither are such tears, and the deep beauty that 25 dwells in them, their only portion. Light visits the hearts as it does the eyes of all living: there is a force, too, in this youth, that enables him to trample on misfortune; nay to bind it under his feet to make him sport. For a bold, warm, buoyant humour of character has been 30 given him; and so the thick-coming shapes of evil are welcomed with a gay, friendly irony, and in their closest pressure he bates no jot of heart or hope. *Vague yearnings of ambition* fail not, as he grows up; *dreamy fancies hang like cloud-cities* around him; the curtain of *Exist-*

ence is slowly rising, in many-coloured splendour and gloom : and the auroral light of first love is gilding his horizon, and the music of song is on his path ; and so he walks

. in glory and in joy,
Behind his plough, upon the mountain side.

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We ourselves know, from the best evidence, that up to this date Burns was happy ; nay that he was the gayest, brightest, most fantastic, fascinating being to be found in the world ; more so even than he ever afterwards appeared. But now, at this early age, he quits the paternal roof ; goes forth into looser, louder, more exciting society ; and becomes initiated in those dissipations, those vices, which a certain class of philosophers have asserted to be a natural preparative for entering on active life ; a kind of mud-bath, in which the youth is, as it were, necessitated to steep, and, we suppose, cleanse himself, before the real toga of Manhood can be laid on him. We shall not dispute much with this class of philosophers ; we hope they are mistaken ; for Sin and Re-
morse so easily beset us at all stages of life, and are always such indifferent company, that it seems hard we should, at any stage, be forced and fated not only to meet but to yield to them, and even serve for a term in their leprous armada. We hope it is not so. Clear we
are, at all events, it cannot be the training one receives in this Devil's service, but only our determining to desert from it, that fits us for true manly Action. We become men, not after we have been dissipated, and disappointed in the chase of false pleasure ; but after we have ascertained, in any way, what impassable barriers hem us in through this life ; how mad it is to hope for contentment to our infinite soul from the gifts of this extremely

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finite world ; that a man must be sufficient for himself ; and that for suffering and enduring there is no remedy but striving and doing. Manhood begins when we have in any way made truce with Necessity ; begins even
5 when we have surrendered to Necessity, as the most part only do ; but begins joyfully and hopefully only when we have reconciled ourselves to Necessity ; and thus, in reality, triumphed over it, and felt that in Necessity we are free. Surely, such lessons as this last, which, in one
10 shape or other, is the grand lesson for every mortal man, are better learned from the lips of a devout mother, in the looks and actions of a devout father, while the heart is yet soft and pliant, than in collision with the sharp adamant of Fate, attracting us to shipwreck us, when the
15 heart is grown hard, and may be broken before it will become contrite. Had Burns continued to learn this, as he was already learning it, in his father's cottage, he would have learned it fully, which he never did ; and been saved many a lasting aberration, many a bitter hour
20 and year of remorseful sorrow.

It seems to us another circumstance of fatal import in Burns's history, that at this time too he became involved in the religious quarrels of his district ; that he was enlisted and feasted, as the fighting man of the New
25 Light Priesthood, in their highly unprofitable warfare. At the tables of these free-minded clergy he learned much more than was needful for him. Such liberal ridicule of fanaticism awakened in his mind scruples about Religion itself ; and a whole world of Doubts, which it required
30 quite another set of conjurors than these men to exorcise. We do not say that such an intellect as his could have escaped similar doubts at some period of his history ; or even that he could, at a later period, have come through them altogether victorious and unharmed ;

but it seems peculiarly unfortunate that this time, above all others, should have been fixed for the encounter. For now, with principles assailed by evil example from without, by 'passions raging like demons' from within, he had little need of sceptical misgivings to whisper treason 5 in the heat of the battle, or to cut off his retreat if he were already defeated. He loses his feeling of innocence ; his mind is at variance with itself ; the old divinity no longer presides there ; but wild Desires and wild Repentance alternately oppress him. Ere long, too, he 10 has committed himself before the world ; his character for sobriety, dear to a Scottish peasant as few corrupted worldlings can even conceive, is destroyed in the eyes of men ; and his only refuge consists in trying to disbelieve his guiltiness, and is but a refuge of lies. The blackest 15 desperation now gathers over him, broken only by red lightnings of remorse. The whole fabric of his life is blasted asunder ; for now not only his character, but his personal liberty, is to be lost ; men and Fortune are leagued for his hurt ; 'hungry Ruin has him in the wind.' 20 He sees no escape but the saddest of all : exile from his loved country, to a country in every sense inhospitable and abhorrent to him. While the 'gloomy night is gathering fast,' in mental storm and solitude, as well as in physical, he sings his wild farewell to Scotland: 25

Farewell, my friends ; farewell, my foes !
 My peace with these, my love with those :
 The bursting tears my heart declare ;
 Adieu, my native banks of Ayr !

Light breaks suddenly in on him in floods ; but still a 30 false transitory light, and no real sunshine. He is invited to Edinburgh ; hastens thither with anticipating heart ; is welcomed as in a triumph, and with universal

blandishment and acclamation ; whatever is wisest, whatever is greatest or loveliest there, gathers round him, to gaze on his face, to show him honour, sympathy, affection. Burns's appearance among the sages and nobles of
5 Edinburgh must be regarded as one of the most singular phenomena in modern Literature ; almost like the appearance of some Napoleon among the crowned sovereigns of modern Politics. For it is nowise as ' a mockery king,' set there by favour, transiently and for a purpose,
10 pose, that he will let himself be treated ; still less is he a mad Rienzi, whose sudden elevation turns his too weak head : but he stands there on his own basis ; cool, unastonished, holding his equal rank from Nature herself ; putting forth no claim which there is not strength *in* him,
15 as well as about him, to vindicate. Mr. Lockhart has some forcible observations on this point :

' It needs no effort of imagination,' says he, ' to conceive what the sensations of an isolated set of scholars (almost all either clergymen or professors) must have been in the presence
20 of this big-boned, black-browed, brawny stranger, with his great flashing eyes, who, having forced his way among them from the plough-tail at a single stride, manifested in the whole strain of his bearing and conversation a most thorough conviction, that in the society of the most eminent men of his
25 nation he was exactly where he was entitled to be ; hardly deigned to flatter them by exhibiting even an occasional symptom of being flattered by their notice ; by turns calmly measured himself against the most cultivated understandings of his time in discussion ; overpowered the *bon mots* of the
30 most celebrated convivialists by broad floods of merriment, impregnated with all the burning life of genius ; astounded bosoms habitually enveloped in the thrice-piled folds of social reserve, by compelling them to tremble,—nay, to tremble *visibly*,—beneath the fearless touch of natural pathos ; and
35 all this without indicating the smallest willingness to be ranked

among those professional ministers of excitement, who are content to be paid in money and smiles for doing what the spectators and auditors would be ashamed of doing in their own persons, even if they had the power of doing it ; and last, and probably worst of all, who was known to be in the habit 5 of enlivening societies which they would have scorned to approach, still more frequently than their own, with eloquence no less magnificent ; with wit, in all likelihood still more daring ; often enough, as the superiors whom he fronted without alarm might have guessed from the beginning, and had ere 10 long no occasion to guess, with wit pointed at themselves.'

The farther we remove from this scene, the more singular will it seem to us : details of the exterior aspect of it are already full of interest. Most readers recollect Mr. Walker's personal interviews with Burns as among 15 the best passages of his Narrative : a time will come when this reminiscence of Sir Walter Scott's, slight though it is, will also be precious :

'As for Burns,' writes Sir Walter, 'I may truly say, *Virgilium vidi tantùm*. I was a lad of fifteen in 1786-7, 20 when he came first to Edinburgh, but had sense and feeling enough to be much interested in his poetry, and would have given the world to know him : but I had very little acquaintance with any literary people, and still less with the gentry of the west country, the two sets that he most frequented. Mr. 25 Thomas Grierson was at that time a clerk of my father's. He knew Burns, and promised to ask him to his lodgings to dinner ; but had no opportunity to keep his word ; otherwise I might have seen more of this distinguished man.' As it was, I saw him one day at the late venerable Professor Ferguson's, 30 where there were several gentlemen of literary reputation, among whom I remember the celebrated Mr. Dugald Stewart. Of course, we youngsters sat silent, looked and listened. The only thing I remember which was remarkable in Burns's manner, was the effect produced upon him by a print of 35



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